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# BETWEEN TWO CONTINENTS

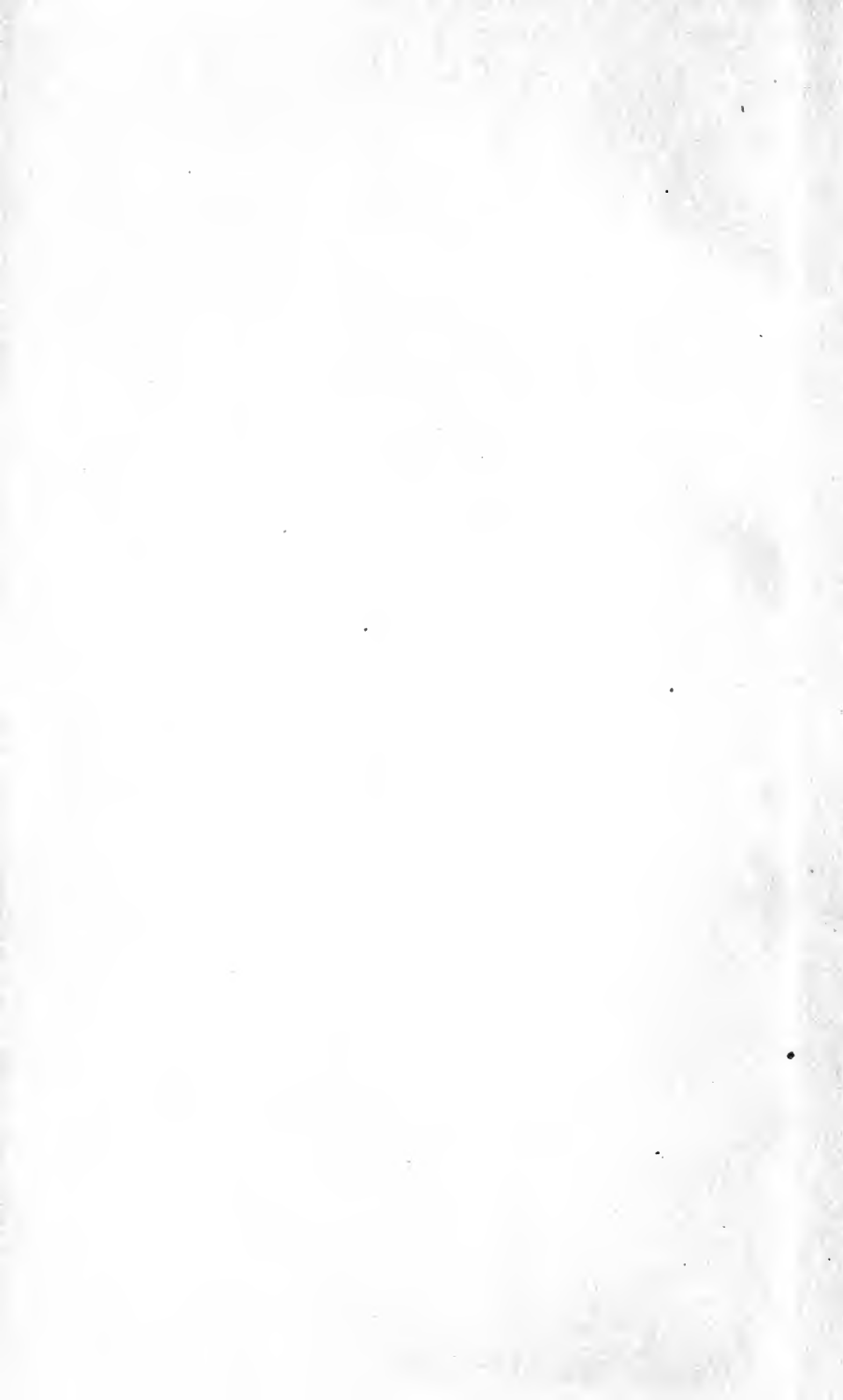




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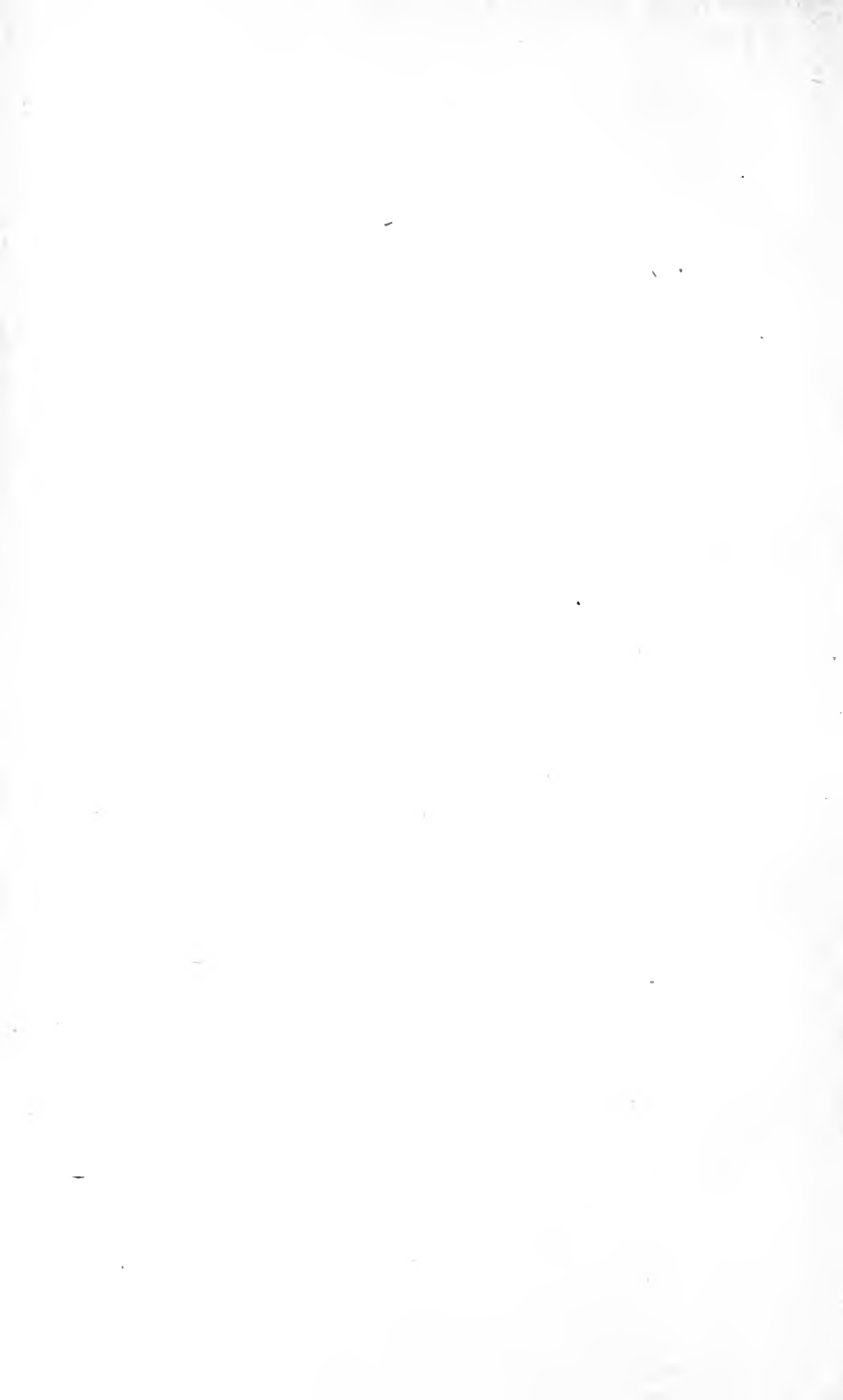
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## **BETWEEN TWO CONTINENTS**







CAPTAIN ATTERLING.

*Frontispiece.*

# BETWEEN TWO CONTINENTS

NOTES FROM A JOURNEY  
IN CENTRAL AMERICA, 1920

BY

H.R.H. PRINCE WILLIAM OF SWEDEN

*William*

(1)

LONDON  
EVELEIGH NASH AND GRAYSON  
LIMITED

1922

TRANSLATED FROM THE SWEDISH

BY

W. WORSTER, M.A.



## SUMMARY OF AUTHORITIES CONSULTED

- BEUCHAT, H.—“Manuel d'Archéologie Américaine.”
- BRIGHAM, WILLIAM T.—“Guatemala, the Land of the Quetzil.”
- JOYCE, THOMAS E.—“Central American and West Indian  
Archæology.”
- „ „ „Mexican Archæology.”
- KOEBEL, W. H.—“Central America.”
- LEHMAN, WALTER.—“Methods and Results in Mexican Research.”
- MAUDSLAY, ALFRED P.—“A Glimpse at Guatemala.”
- „ „ „Some American Problems.”
- MEANS, PHILIP AINSWORTH.—“History of the Spanish Conquest of Yucatan and of the Itzas.”
- MUNRO, DANA G.—“The Five Republics of Central America.”
- ROGERS, E.—“British Honduras : Its Resources and Development.”
- SPINDEN, H. J.—“Ancient Civilisations of Mexico and Central America.”
- STEPHENS, JOHN L.—“Incidents of Travel in Yucatan.”
- STOLL, OTTO.—“Guatemala.”



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## PREFACE

### TO THE ENGLISH EDITION

"BETWEEN TWO CONTINENTS" was originally written for Swedish readers, without any idea of subsequent translation. Now that it is to appear in English, and thus, to a certain extent, become internationally readable, I would merely point out that it contains a good deal of descriptive matter which was intended for my countrymen alone, and must no doubt, to the travelled English, appear superfluous.

I should also like to note that the Brief History of the Mayas was written by a layman, and is therefore by no means to be regarded as a scientific, or even precisely accurate piece of work. It is based on the by no means extensive literature I had at my disposal. For in Sweden, little is known at all regarding this branch of the early civilisation of the New World.

And finally, in case this book should chance to fall into the hands of any Guatemalan, I will only say that my impressions from that country were written without any feeling of ill-will, but on the contrary, with a view to making it better known; and also, to open the eyes of those

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concerned to certain improprieties in the administration from which it has suffered during recent years. The account of the Revolution of 1920 is based on personal experience, supplemented by the statements of eye-witnesses, newspaper reports in the revolutionary press, etc. The notes were made on the spur of the moment, and I have had no opportunity of correcting them since, nor had I any access to official documents. It is therefore likely that subsequent historians may find the official record of the proceedings somewhat different from what I have described.

THE AUTHOR.

*Stockholm, December, 1921.*



## PREFACE

FIRST of all, sincere and hearty thanks to all those who, in one way or another, helped to make this voyage to Central America an accomplished fact. Invaluable were the gifts contributed by persons interested in the object, more especially to the scientific side of the expedition. Much of the information and advice thus kindly given proved of great service in overcoming the difficulties which frequently arose.

There is an ancient proverb to the effect that "*les extrêmes se touchent*." Under the cold, pale-golden light of the midnight sun, amid the snowy heights and huge calving glaciers of Spitzbergen ; here, as chance would have it, first arose the thought that Sweden, too, should take some part in the "discovery" of Central America, as regards the culture of those ancient peoples who lived and dwelt on the rocky promontory between two mighty continents ; and that our country ought, in other ways as well, to be brought into closer contact with the rich territories which divide the ever-rolling waters of the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

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And, as it proved, there is much to be done in both of these respects. There is unlimited scope for Swedish initiative and research ; new connecting links must be forged, and old ones strengthened. Increased trade intercourse would certainly be productive of considerable results, while the cultivation of plantations on rational lines would in course of time undoubtedly prove a remunerative undertaking. In the extensive sphere of archæology, a wealth of undiscovered secrets still lies hidden, waiting only to be brought to light. Forest and jungle keep jealous ward over their treasures, but even the strongest lianas must give way before stubborn perseverance.

To what extent the members of the expedition have succeeded in accomplishing any of the objects in view must be left for the future to determine. Owing to untoward circumstances, the two scientists, Professor Hartman and Dr. Hemmendorff, who were to have accompanied the expedition and formed its scientific basis, were unfortunately prevented ; the former by a series of unforeseen accidents, the latter by ill-health in the trying climate, which obliged him, to our loss and regret, to return home before we had gone farther than Belize.

Our efforts were therefore necessarily restricted chiefly to preliminary work, and the procuring of such information, and establishing of such con-

## PREFACE

nections, as might serve our fellow-countrymen, and subsequent explorers, in good stead.

In this respect, all that time and circumstances in reason permitted was done. Such archaeological material, too, as we could manage, was collected and handed over to the Ethnographical Section of the Riksmuseum, all photographs and sketches of any value being likewise placed at the disposition of that department. In the absence of qualified experts, however, no excavations could be made.

The present work is merely a simple narrative, from the layman's point of view, of the happenings and adventures encountered by four Swedes in that country of the unexpected : Central America. Where the text fails, the illustrations must speak for themselves. These latter were, for the most part, taken by the skilful photographer of the Skandinavisk Film Central, Direktör R. Olsson.

Finally, a word of thanks from the author to his companions—Ingenjör A. Sjögren, Direktör R. Olsson and Lt. B. af Sandeberg—for their valuable co-operation, confidence and unfailing support.

*Stockholm, September, 1920.*



# BETWEEN TWO CONTINENTS

## ACROSS THE ATLANTIC

"SWEDISH cargo, Swedish keel," should be the motto of all concerned in shipping, or in any way interested in the problem of our imports and exports. The enormous importance of sea-going traffic has been more than ever demonstrated in the Great War. Indeed, one might almost say that tonnage was the decisive factor ; the weight which gradually turned the scale in favour of the Entente. And that this was fully realised by the Central Powers is shown by the manner in which they turned to the unrestricted submarine campaign.

In dealing with the question of international trade connections, however, there is more to be considered than the mere technical fact that a country possesses this or that amount of tonnage. There is another factor of the highest importance, to wit, displaying the flag. Sweden is a country poor and small compared with the Great Powers, and situate outside the great arterial routes of

general traffic; the more needful, then, for us to see that it is not forgotten and thrust aside, but keeps the world aware of its existence. And there is, perhaps, no better means to this end than by displaying the national colours, not only in long-known, familiar ports and on the old-established trade routes, but also in places more remote, where untilled soil awaits the cultivator's hand, and where it is essential to be among the first arrivals if one is to have a share at all. The more our blue-and-yellow Swedish colours are seen in extra-European waters, the better. Every showing spins an invisible thread leading back to the mother-country, helping to make Sweden and the Swedes known and acknowledged in the world, and to gain for them the place that is their due.

Few have realised the importance of this to such a degree as the Nordstjärnan Shipping Company. Pioneers in many respects, more particularly as regards the question of motor-driven cargo-boats, the Johnson Line have never spared expense, or given in to obstacles, when it was a case of winning due respect for our national symbol in distant lands, introducing Swedish initiative, and opening up new and extensive connections. Thanks to this unbroken tradition, the line most kindly undertook not only to convey the members of the expedition to the New World, but also to make a special journey on

their account, to Belize in British Honduras, this being chosen as the starting point of the expedition.

Thus, then, it came about, that early one wintry morning in January, Dr. Hemmendorff, Direktör Olsson, Lt. af Sandeberg and the writer found themselves on the deck of the M.S. *Kronprinsessan Margareta*, casting a last farewell glance at the skerries of Bohuslän in the blue distance. Ingenjör Sjögren, then in London on business connected with the expedition, was to join us a few days later at Torquay.

There was a pleasant sense of relief in thus leaving everything behind. No importunate telephones ringing, no morning papers crammed with news that self-respect forbade one to leave unread, no dull dinner-parties where food and stock exchange prices were discussed as if they made up the essential principle of life. Nothing but sea and sky, salt spray and the fresh breeze, filling the lungs with new health, and the blood with red corpuscles. Silence, calm and rest. Not a sound but the distant hum of the engines, hardly audible on deck, and then only as the soft purring of some gigantic cat ; and now and again the heavy clang of the ship's bell, striking the hour at regular intervals, marking the ever-rolling waves of time.

M.S. *Kronprinsessan Margareta*—how sadly the name rings now!—is a splendid vessel of the

usual cargo-boat type, built for motor power. The broad, plated foredeck roofs over mighty cavities, in the gloom of which are hidden wares of the most varied character, from matches and pins to bales of paper and heavy rails. Farther aft is the engine-room, where two Diesel motors, surrounded by auxiliary engines, and, to the eye of the uninitiated, hopelessly entangled in a maze of many-curved tubing, faithfully beat out their unceasing revolutions through a twenty-four hours' working day. Thump, thump, thump—with the regularity of clockwork. In fine weather, they can send the heavy ship along at ten to eleven knots without effort; foul weather, on the other hand, may bring down the speed considerably. Glittering metal, gasping cylinders, discreetly clicking valves—amid these moves a blue-clad engineer in soft, oil-sodden slippers. He feels the bearings, tightens up a nut here, eases one there, casts a passing glance at the gauges, and rubs his hands contentedly—no need for him to waste tongue on lazy stokers who never can keep the pressure level in the boilers. The two thousand horsepower from the engines call for no more than forty to fifty kilos of fuel oil per hour. No bunkers to trim, no firebars caked with slag, no red-hot furnace doors; just turn on a tap, and the power comes flowing of its own accord—what could be simpler?

Up above are the cabins, the galley and the





SCRAPING DECKS.



M.S. KRONPRINSESSAN MARGARETA.

*Facing page 4.*



dining saloon, simply but comfortably furnished throughout. Immediately beneath the bridge resides the deity—to wit, the Captain. The name is tempting, even at the risk of seeming blasphemous, for it is hard to find a better. He is the god of this floating world, and the lives of those on board are in his hand. Whether or no it is a divine occupation may be left unsaid ; at least it affords abundant opportunity for the exercise of human qualities both good and bad. Such an office is indeed no sinecure. The master of the vessel has everything through his hands ; his eagle eye must be ever on the watch, observing the minutest detail. There are the ship's papers to be kept in order, cargo, stores and provisions to be inspected. The errant courses of the stars must be clear to his eye as the straight length of Sturegatan, the lights of the heavens familiar as the numbering of tramway lines at home. The welfare of the crew demands his constant attention, and twice a day at least, questioning passengers have to be politely but firmly informed that the weather is governed by still higher Powers ; if the North Sea lay smooth as glass when they embarked, it is no guarantee that it will be as calm to-day.

Captain Atterling possessed, in a high degree, those various qualities which go to make the perfect commander. One might see as much from the general neatness and order that prevailed

on board. Wherever one turned, from the first mate to the odd boy in the galley, there was always a smile of pleasure at any mention of the Captain's name. "A thorough good fellow, who knows his job," was the verdict all round.

Carlsson was no whit behind the rest in approval. Though but a recruit in his second year, he found good grounds for being content with life. Keeping watch, or taking a turn at the wheel, were things he disdained entirely, but as a volunteer, he made a most reliable look-out, giving a loud warning bark to announce the vicinity of an approaching steamer in dark or foggy weather. Carlsson had stiff brown hair, could laugh on the word of command, and wag his tail when need arose. This last, indeed, was Carlsson's only means of expressing satisfaction. Somewhat lame he was, and touchy in temper, after several nights of dissipation in Christiania, but his spirits gradually rose as the latitude decreased. A ship's dog soon becomes a favourite with all on board, and is regarded as an indispensable mascot. The troops in Flanders had their goat; why then should not a Swedish motor-vessel have its Carlsson?

After a raging snowstorm in the North Sea, that played *allegro furioso* on the rigging as if it had been violin strings, we passed the English Channel, with the inevitable drizzling rain. Torquay lay closely wrapped in its winter sleep

when we picked up the remaining member of our party, almost buried in the mass of tent equipment and provision boxes he had brought from London. We had thought it well to make ourselves as far as possible independent of roads and towns in case of need, for it was no easy matter to make sure what things would be like on the other side. Fire-arms, too, were provided in the needful quantity, following the well-known principle that it is healthier to be ready with a gun oneself than to stand merely observing one's opponent in the act of taking aim.

The dreaded Bay of Biscay proved unexpectedly amiable, and it was not long before the sea lay blue and clear, with the sun blazing down as on a midsummer day at home. To avoid the westerly gales which harry the North Atlantic at this season, our course was laid well to the southward. Somewhere between Madeira and the Azores we ran into the north-east monsoon, which held until we reached the West Indies. Day and night it blew, a level breeze of uniform strength from the same quarter. The very wind for a full-rigged ship of the olden days, with flying topgallants and swelling stunsails! But those times, alas! so full of poetry and the brimming joy of life, are for ever past. Now, no one thinks of anything but engines and horsepower and revolutions and record runs.

The sea lay for the most part deserted; as if

traffic had not yet fully recovered after the blood-letting of war. The only vessel we passed was a Greek tramp steamer of indeterminable age and colour. Since the Battle of Salamis, the Greeks have never been particularly famous for their seamanship; consequently, it was but natural that our friend should hoist a signal asking for latitude and longitude. When we had given them their position, and wished them *bon voyage*, up went another signal: "Make way!" As if there were not turning room for two solitary vessels in the whole Atlantic! But the modern representatives of ancient Hellas are a trifle inclined to spread themselves, so to speak, at the expense of others.

It was not long before the heat commenced in earnest, bringing with it flying-fish and Portuguese men-of-war—or possibly vice versa. One moonlight night, one of the former managed to jump right in through the scuttle of the second mate's cabin, and landed on his writing table. The visitor was cooked and eaten at lunch next day, with all the attention and interest properly due to an acrobatic flying-fish.

Despite the heat, we took our regular exercise with zeal. Up and down the deck fore and aft at the double, scraping the deck-plates ready for painting, lunge and recover, on the toes rise, from the hips bend, or whatever the proper terms may be, with various other postures of physical



A FLYING FISH.

*To face page 8.*





torture, were included in the order of the day. But when evening came, with its glittering moonlight and velvety sky, the Southern Cross rising higher and higher every day ; with the phosphorescence flaming round the bows and the log-line cutting a gleaming streak through the wake, then was the time to take a deck-chair aside in some corner, light a pipe and enjoy life, giving rein to one's thoughts. For the tropic night, so full of concentrated peace, is made for dreams and meditation.

But the time went on, day followed day in regular succession ; there was barely time, as it proved, to get through half the library on board dealing with the Conquest of Mexico, Colonisation problems of Central America, and prehistoric Maya culture. Then, on the twentieth day, came a hail from the look-out, in a sleepy southland drawl : " Looks to me for sure like land ahead there ! "

Hundreds of miles of the Atlantic lay behind us.

By means of charts compiled with mathematical exactitude, log, sextant, chronometer and compass, we had long since reckoned out the day, hour, and minute at which the first group of islands in the West Indies should appear on the horizon. All very simple when you know how—there is no great skill required nowadays to find the way with the reliable nautical instruments at one's command. Yet for all that, a vessel

may run aground and be wrecked. The more imposing then, it seems, to look back to the days of the discovery of America, and reflect what an achievement was that of Columbus and his men.

To the mind of the ordinary man in those days, the sea and infinity were almost synonymous ideas. Or at best, men believed that the water ended abruptly somewhere in an abyss, where a vessel passing beyond the verge would be hurled down into empty space. What reckless courage, what inflexible confidence must those Spaniards have possessed, to set out thus with but the vague direction "westward" as their goal. In crazy caravels, with a meagre supply of water, and none but the most primitive instruments for observation, exposed to all the unknown fickle chances of wind and wave, they faced all perils, and with stubborn energy carried through their plans, based, after all, on mere home-brewed common sense.

"There must be land to the westward, if we sail far enough; well and good; we will sail till we can sail no farther." But whether the voyage would last a dozen or a hundred days, none could say.

This surely was true seamanship, a masterly achievement, akin to that of the viking raiders in the Levant. To cross the Atlantic nowadays is child's play in comparison.

The land just sighted grew larger every minute.

Three lofty peaks rose majestically from the water, and ere long the ancient Swedish island of St. Barthelemy lay clearly outlined against the horizon, with the rich gold of a tropic sky aglow behind it. To the left the sea broke in spray over the low reefs of Coco Island, to the right loomed the rectangular mass of the Frigate Rock. With regard to this last, it is said that in certain lights its silhouette so completely resembles that of a full-rigged ship, that the captain of a French warship once coming upon it in the dusk, fired a whole broadside at the rock, taking it for a strange sail that had failed to answer his warning gun.

At a council of war held on board some days earlier, it had been unanimously decided that since our course properly lay straight through the Lesser Antilles, passing wide of St. Barthelemy, one day should be spared for a visit to this old Swedish island. Our films-photographer was burning with impatience to "screen" the natives, while science was equally anxious to ascertain whether possibly any descendants of hepatica or euphrasy might have found their way hither.

Slowly, and with careful soundings, the vessel moved up into Gustavia roads, and soon we lay at anchor between the Sugarloaf and the Sinners, two small coral islands, of which the former, especially, answers to its name.

To us, children of a later age, it seems almost

a fable now, that Sweden, too, should once upon a time have had its colonies. And yet, after all, it is not so very long ago.

The first attempt at colonisation was made as far back as the reign of Queen Christina, when, in 1638, the settlement of New Sweden, on the Delaware, was formed to support the steadily increasing foreign trade. The place was not long, however, in Swedish hands; in the reign of Charles X, the Dutch found it to their interest to annex it.

It was not till considerably later that the colonies which were of any real importance to the mother country were acquired; these comprised the two groups of islands, St. Barthelemy and Guadeloupe, in the curved archipelago of the Antilles.

During Gustavus III's visit to Paris, in July, 1784, a treaty was concluded with France, whereby, among other territories, the little island of St. Barthelemy, with the adjacent rocks and reefs, was ceded to Sweden.<sup>1</sup>

On the 23rd of September in the same year the King issued an order, dated from the palace of Drottningholm, to the Lord High Admiral Karl August Ehrenswärd, to equip an expedition for the purpose of taking possession of the colony,

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<sup>1</sup> Part of the information here given is derived from two articles in the *Nautisk tidskrift*, 1916-17, dealing with the colonisation of St. Barthelemy.

granting a sum of 8,000 rixdollars specie for carrying out the annexation in due form. Salomon von Rajalin, one of the naval heroes of the Gustavian period, was appointed first Governor of the island.

On the 4th of December two vessels put out from Älvsborg roads. One of them, the frigate *Sprengtporten*, under command of Captain Puke, carried, according to the ship's papers, the following additional passengers destined for St. Barthélemy: a governor, an adjutant, a priest, a surgeon, two non-commissioned officers, forty-seven volunteers, and three boys, making fifty-six in all. The other vessel was a merchantman chartered by the Government, carrying, among other things, provisions for ten months and water for four, together with eight six-pounder guns, intended for saluting purposes on the island.

After a difficult voyage, in the course of which seventy-five per cent. of the crew went down with dysentery, the expedition finally reached its destination on the 8th of March in the following year, and the Swedish flag, "greeted with manifestations of welcome and delight on the part of the native population," was hoisted for the first time over the newly-acquired colony.

Dahlman, the ship's chaplain, who, during the time the frigate remained at the island, devoted much time and interest to frequent expeditions with a view to acquiring local information, has

left notes of his explorations, from which the following may be quoted :

“ The climate is considered one of the most healthy in the West Indies, and it is stated that within the memory of man, no death has occurred, save from old age. The extensive and valuable timber on the island was found to have been hewn down ; the people were in a state of poverty, and the ground, for the greater part, untilled. A little cotton-planting was all the inhabitants now carried on. Five horses, a few sheep, oxen and cows, with pigs, fowls and turkeys, formed the stock of domestic animals. The little settlement at the end of the creek called Le Carenage, where later the town of Gustavia was founded, consisted of some six hundred souls, of which one-third were negroes, and the remainder descended from French families.” But—says Dahlman—this number was considerably increased even during the time the frigate lay there. The women were dressed in European fashion, and seemed, to the Swedish observer, rather ugly than the reverse. They were very skilful with the distaff, spinning a very fine cotton thread. A pair of stockings made from this thread were so thin that the two could be drawn together through a gold ring of ordinary size. The favourite recreation of the people was dancing, and never a week passed without young and old joining with the greatest eagerness in some such display. Two

very indifferent fiddlers were the sole musicians on the island. As regards the negroes, they were humanely treated. As an article of trade greatly in demand, for which a profitable market could be found here, mention is made—apart from provisions and the coarser sorts of linen stuffs—of nails, particularly such as could be used for roofing; also large copper plates, suitable for stills. The ancient fort built by the French was put into repair, and given a new flagstaff brought out for the occasion, from which the blue and yellow colours were to wave in future. The eight pieces of cannon were mounted, and the regular daily guard consisted of a corporal and a few volunteers, whose business it was to report the approach of any vessels to the Governor. A few hastily-erected drinking shops served refreshment to the thirsty—and the new arrivals from the northern lands found themselves in the heat of the climate excessively thirsty at times. A roughly-built residence, comprising two rooms and a kitchen, was erected for the Governor; otherwise, tents were used. It was not long, however, before vessels from America began to call at the place, bringing food and building materials, and at the same time wealthy traders from the islands near at hand sought information as to opportunities of making money. And before very long one stately house after another was built. The little community, which had for

years past been neglected and forgotten, entered now upon a new and flourishing stage.

If the outward voyage of the *Sprengtporten* was a hard one, the journey home to Sweden, on the other hand, proved a veritable record for speed. On the thirty-sixth day the vessel anchored safe and sound in the river at Stockholm.

At home the newly-founded colony was regarded for a time with great interest. Incited by the highly gratifying results which had followed the establishment of the free port of Marstrand, Gustavus III had a charter drawn up in 1775, whereby St. Barthelemy was declared Porto Franco. We read here, *inter alia* :

“ . . . Whereas We, having regard to the furtherance of Trade upon the island of St. Barthelemy, situate in the Western Indies, and subject to the Crown of Sweden, have been graciously pleased to declare the said Island a Free Port, or so-called Porto Franco, wherein goods and effects of all kinds soever may be stored, delivered, or be dispatched from thence to other parts—therefore, and to the end that all, whether native or foreign (men) who might be wishful to partake in the said trade, may enjoy unhindered occasion to exploit the opportunities afforded by the favourable situation, healthy climate, and safe harbour of the said island ; We do hereby accord unto all nations



without exception, unrestricted freedom to approach the said Island of St. Barthelemy with their vessels, there to load and unload, whether in time of war or of peace ; and do accord to all permission there to take up residence, and carry on the business of trade and shipping, enjoying furthermore full religious liberty, with all such other privileges and liberties as have already been accorded to this island, or may subsequently be granted ; whereto We further concede to all such persons as may be fugitive for debt, a refuge upon the said island for the space of ten years, from whatsoever place they may come. To all whom it may concern . . . etc."

The immediate future, however, proved in many respects other than Gustavus had intended when granting the charter. It appears that in ignorance of the actual conditions, many people conceived an altogether exaggerated idea of the size and importance of the colony. As a matter of fact, the King was shortly after obliged to issue a proclamation, warning intending emigrants against "over-hastily removing to St. Barthelemy." This document is likewise of interest, affording one of the earliest instances of discouraging emigration. It is dated 2nd May, 1786, and runs as follows :

" We, Gustavus III, etc., hereby make known,

that since We, on the 7th September last, advised Our faithful subjects of the Free Port, or Porto Franco, established on the island of St. Barthelemy, in the West Indies, and subject to the Crown of Sweden, and of the privileges by Us graciously accorded those who might desire to take up residence there; We have, from information received, learned that many of the poorer class have therein found incentive to depart out of the kingdom to that island; but We, having ever due regard to their welfare and prosperity, cannot suffer them, by an improper understanding of the purpose of Our gracious decree, to be led to embark upon an enterprise which must bring upon them the sorriest result; We, therefore, graciously declare that Our former gracious proclamation was solely conceived to the encouragement of those who might be wishful to take up residence upon the said island, but that its (the island's) great remoteness overseas, the expenses of a long and hazardous voyage, the restricted extent of the island, which cannot receive or support any great number of inhabitants, the lack of ground, livestock, building materials and firewood, and the like, cannot but reduce to further distress those cultivators who should venture to seek their livelihood upon the place, relinquishing their beloved native land, wherein they, as hitherto their forbears, by the blessing

of the Almighty, have lived in comfort, honour and prosperity. We therefore charge all those invested with the exercise of Our authority, further to inform Our subjects under their jurisdiction to the aforesaid purpose, and in such wise as may convince them, both as to what is in their own best interest, and of Our gracious care for their well-being. To all whom it may concern . . ." etc.

But, though it was found advisable to keep emigration within bounds, trade, on the other hand, was encouraged in many ways. In the same year, the charter of the newly-formed West India Company was issued, granting the shareholders exclusive right for fifteen years of carrying on trade and shipping at St. Barthelemy, with the other islands of the West Indies, and North America.

The necessary funds were procured in the usual way, by subscription. The vessels were granted certain privileges, similar to those of the old East Indiamen, and the cargoes were sold, on arriving home, by public auction.

The chief asset of the Company, however, was the right granted it to administer the finances of the island, collecting all taxes and revenues due to the State, including also the proceeds of the salt works. In return, the Company was required to pay the officials of the port and island,

the soldiery and government servants, in addition to which the commercial undertakings, buildings and plant, were to be maintained in good repair, and the old French salt works to be restored.

Despite these privileges, however, generous though they were according to modern ideas, the Company proved an unremunerative undertaking, and lasted but a short while. The very first expedition proved a failure, owing to the war of 1788, and later, traffic by sea was affected by disturbances in the West Indies, in the course of which the English took possession of the island. Several vessels were captured, and when, after a while, the profits were found to be steadily decreasing in proportion to the risk and trouble involved, the Company applied to the Government for a further extension of its privileges. These were also granted, but interest in the undertaking slackened ever more and more, until, in 1805, the shareholders decided to liquidate.

Then followed some years of a languishing existence for the little Swedish outpost in the west. The establishment of a special Colonial Office in Stockholm, however, brought better times for the free port, and in particular, the war between England and America, 1812-1814, gave new life to trade and shipping. In the space of two years the total revenues rose to two million kronor, and up to 1830 the free port contributed over five millions to the Swedish exchequer.

Then, however, a decline set in, due chiefly to external conditions in the West Indies and the general political situation in Europe. The revenues dwindled, and for the next few decades the island of St. Barthelemy was, economically speaking, a troublesome child indeed. And after a time the idea arose of ceding it once more to its former owners.

It was in 1640 that France first took possession ; in 1877, under the terms of a treaty signed in Paris, it was restored to France in consideration of a sum of 400,000 francs as payment for buildings, etc., and to defray the cost of compensation to Swedish government servants, whose office thus ceased to exist.

It was with mingled feelings that we rowed in towards Gustavia. Before us lay a stretch of land which for nearly a century had been Swedish. Would all traces of that occupation have been swept away already, or were there still some remnants of our northern culture to be found ? Forty-three years before, the island had been looked upon as practically valueless. Must the same stern judgment be passed to-day ?

The first impression from without was disheartening. Naked walls with charred window-frames, ruins, masses of debris, glaring decay and poverty on every side. Some ten years back the town had been burnt down, and only what was absolutely needed had been rebuilt.

Of the old forts on either side the entrance channel hardly stone on stone remained ; a few big storage buildings by the waterside stood neglected and tottering. The situation, however, is idyllic, with lofty hills on three sides, and the blue-green, translucent water on the fourth.

A small boat with a yellow flag flying came out to meet us, and the harbourmaster, an aged negro in a dirty white jacket, hailed us in French :

“ What do you want here ? ”

“ To look at the place.”

“ And your sailing vessel, where is it from ? ”

The lack of funnels had evidently been remarked. A motor-driven craft of such size had never before been seen at the island.

“ From Sweden.”

“ Ah ? ”

“ Is there anyone who understands Swedish ? ”  
(This in Swedish.)

Then one of the rowers looked up, his black face gleaming all over like the sun.

“ *Ja, yes, jag tala bra svensk !* ”

But that, it seemed, was the whole extent of his vocabulary, and the conversation proceeded thenceforward in English.

The whole town was astir, and a dense crowd had gathered at the quay ; in the front rank were the notables of the place, comprising the mayor, the local magistrate, two French gendarmes and a few toothless old negro women. They stared

curiously at the strangers to begin with, for it is but very rarely that visitors call at the island, but on hearing that we were from Sweden a shout of delight went up. The old men thumped us on the back and shook hands, the women dissolved in tears; even the children hastened to plunder the nearest garden of its flowers and fruit, which were showered on us thereafter at frequent intervals throughout our stay.

"*Massa, jag also vara svensk, svensk, svensk*" (I'm Swedish too) resounded on every side from husky throats, the more excited of the speakers hopping about on one leg in their delight. But all attempts to continue in the same tongue proved in vain.

All this time the French Government officials kept out of sight. For, with Gallic blood in their veins, they were too polite to show, even by so much as a gesture, the least disapproval of this political demonstration, even though it was manifestly in their disfavour.

Then we strolled through the town. Everything had to be inspected, from the school and the churches to the Town Hall and the grocery store.

Decay, neglect and desolation were everywhere apparent. The houses barely hung together. The streets were thickly overgrown with weeds, the gardens lay untended. No signs of initiative, no interest in work of any sort. The population, numbering hardly five hundred souls,

consists almost exclusively of women, aged men, and children, all the young folk going elsewhere. There is no scope here for ready hands and active brains ; it is hopeless to attempt making one's way in a place economically paralysed. Money and capital are lacking. The mother-country, great, rich and powerful itself, has forgotten its little ward ; even the Frenchmen themselves could not but admit as such. No state subsidy, no telegraph station, no doctor. The mails are carried by a crazy schooner which runs to Guadeloupe at any odd time convenient. A Roman Catholic and a Reformed Church congregation contend for the souls of Gustavia's inhabitants ; of the two, only the former can afford a priest of its own. In the latter, the members themselves take it in turns to attend to the needs of the flock. But wherever we went, we heard nothing but good of the days when the island had been under Swedish rule.

There is but little left to remind one of the fact. There is a small kindergarten, where eight nigger children, thanks to annual contributions from Sweden, are given the first elements of an upbringing. Three amiable old English ladies, one of whom had been married to a Swede, act as teachers. Tears came into their eyes as they told how they had stood looking on when the blue and yellow flag above the fort was finally hauled down to be replaced by the tricolour.



And their home was full of views from Stockholm, and lithograph portraits of Charles XV and Oscar II.

A fund of eighty thousand francs, in the name of the last-named king, is the pride of the town. It was allotted in 1877, at the time of the cession to France, and the interest is distributed twice a year among the poor.

The municipal archives still preserve, as a relic, the old Swedish plan of the town, and the property register, compiled in the eighteenth century by Dr. Samuel Fahlberg, who, as the first medical officer of the island, drew up the plans for the building of Gustavia. The names of the streets, however, and of the different quarters of the town, have now been gallicised. And, indeed, it was probably no easy matter for a native to decipher such names as Arkelimästaregatan or Skomakarebrinken !

The principal edifices in the town are the Catholic Church and the Town Hall ; built of sound timber at the commencement of last century, they have more or less withstood the ravages of time. The bell in the belfry is said to have been cast in Sweden, otherwise there was nothing in the appointments to suggest its origin. Prior to 1877, the present Town Hall was the residence of the Swedish Governor.

Generally speaking, there is nothing of note for the sightseer in St. Barthelemy. The island

is of volcanic origin, thirteen kilometres long and two to three kilometres across. At the time of the first Swedish occupation, the inhabitants numbered about five thousand; now there are about half that number.

Not a single spring has ever been discovered; instead, the rainwater is collected in great cisterns. The soil is hard and rocky, little suited for cultivation. In former times, bananas and pine-apples were grown, but both these industries have lapsed into disuse. Some attempt is made instead with cotton, which last year gave a yield, poor enough, it is true, but relatively satisfactory. The country folk derive their origin from Normandy, Frenchmen from that province being the first to settle on the island, and to this day the women may be seen on Sundays wearing the broad white kerchief that forms part of the picturesque Norman peasant costume. Lace-making is carried on to some slight extent, but apart from this, all handicraft is neglected. In Gustavia, however, one may now and then see young girls sitting leisurely at work on artificial flowers, made from different coloured fish-scales and shells. The result, as might be expected, barely meets even the most modest requirements of art handiwork. Nevertheless, these flowers are in great demand locally, and are used in particular as gifts for the bride when anything so unusual as a wedding takes place.

The hours passed quickly, and the brief time allotted for our visit was long since past. With our arms full of flowers, fruit and coco-nuts, sore with shaking hands, and followed by tearful glances, we waved farewell to Gustavia and its kindly inhabitants. The old nigger women howled with grief, and the children shouted "Hurrah!" But through the din one could hear a shrill voice crying with all the force of a good pair of lungs:

"*Jag also vara svensk, svensk . . .*"

Sweden's colonial power is a thing of the past; the politics of that phase are now a part of history. Nevertheless, one may be tempted to ask: Was it right, for a miserable sum of money, to relinquish the last vestige of extra-European possessions, and that in a place so closely bound to the mother-country that the inhabitants even now, after forty-three years of separation, still count it as their greatest good fortune to have been Swedish once? Should we not be glad now to have but a single spot across the Atlantic, however insignificant, to aid and support our growing over-sea trade? But what is done cannot be undone, and the question, of course, has more than one side to be considered.

Louis Palander writes in his journal from the voyage of the frigate *Vanadis*, in 1864:

"What advantages, direct or indirect, accrue to Sweden through the possession of this island,

sufficient to outweigh the annual expenditure of 20,000 rixdollars which the Swedish Exchequer is obliged to furnish, I have not been able to discover. There is, however, the indirect gratification of knowing that Swedish rule is not suffered by an unwilling population."

He is both right and wrong in this. But one thing is certain. The cession of St. Barthelemy meant the loss to Sweden of a handful of people who with a touching, childlike affection held fast by the tradition of their island's connection of nearly a century with the mother-country, and who had no greater wish than to remain so united in the future.

We pursued our voyage. A glimpse of St. Martin to starboard, and on the port side the isle of Saba raised its pointed volcanic cone towards the clouds. On looking at an old map of the Antilles, dated prior to 1878, it will be seen that no fewer than six European countries laid hands on various islands in the archipelago, to all appearance at haphazard, without the slightest order or system. Swedish, Danish, English, French, Spanish and Dutch colonies lay together in a tangled mass. As if all had gathered at once about a table spread for a feast, each grabbing the dainty morsel that lay nearest to hand.

The rocky heights of Portorico, the mist-wrapped mass of Haiti with its two uncivilised

negro republics, and the wooded hills of Jamaica, where the Blue Mountains thrust their ragged peaks above the low evening clouds—all these we passed at a respectful distance. For there is no superabundance of lights in these waters, and those marked on the chart are not always found to be lit. Moreover, the currents here often set strongly in towards land.

We had still two days more before reaching our destination, and were anxious to use them to the best advantage. The provisions lists were completed, equipment seen to, and the tent set up yet once more to make sure that nothing had been forgotten. A feverish activity reigned on board.

There was one more thing, however, which we hoped to get in. Our course lay straight past two little islands in the middle of the Caribbean Sea, north of the coast range of Spanish Honduras. In the sailing directions for 1916 the larger is stated as being about half a mile (?) in diameter, and the smaller only some few acres in extent; at certain seasons of the year a small light is kept burning, but otherwise the islands are uninhabited. Here we proposed to land, bathe, fish, and play Robinson Crusoe one whole afternoon. Set foot on virgin soil, watch the waves breaking upon untouched reefs, and hear the whisper of the evening breeze among the leafy-crowned palms. Lie there—at ease in the

moonlight and dream of the days when pirates used Swan Island as a depôt for their plunder, and, if fortune favoured us, conjure up the spook of some old buccaneer in the channel between the islands, where they used to anchor.

Surely enough, we sighted the islands neatly to time, but—oh horror!—out from the dense growth of palms rose four huge Marconi masts, while on the beach were a good half-dozen newly-erected modern dwellings of unmistakable American design.

Crash! Down came all our lofty anticipations of an unsullied idyll in a moment, and Robinson Crusoe had perforce to evanesce. Sadder and wiser we went on our way, greeted in passing by the frigate birds of the island, which for a short while gathered round our mastheads in such numbers as to form a living cloud which almost shut out the view. Then suddenly they disappeared, as if by magic.

We learned afterwards that Swan Island had been bought up by a big American concern, the United Fruit Company, which had established an intermediary wireless station there, connecting with Guatemala, Honduras, Jamaica and Cuba. The little island is also rich in coco-nuts, turtles and guano.

After a voyage of twenty-eight days or, more precisely, on the 7th of February, we sighted the first coral reefs off the coast of British Honduras.

With the aid of a native pilot, we threaded our way through the intricately curving channels, and by nightfall anchored in the shallow roads of Belize.

Reluctantly we bade farewell to the fine vessel which had borne us patiently and surely on its broad back across the Atlantic, and it was with real regret that we shook hands for the last time with her commander, whose genial companionship and sailor-like qualities had completely won our hearts.

When should we set foot again on Swedish soil ?

## BELIZE

BRITISH HONDURAS is a small stretch of territory sandwiched in between the Republic of Guatemala to the south and west and the Mexican province of Yucatan on the north. On the east its shores are washed by the waves of the Caribbean.

Here, as elsewhere in Central America, three distinct climatological tracts may be observed. There is the *tierra caliente*, or hot land, running along the coast and up the valleys. The climate here is moist and tropical, with luxuriant vegetation and almost impenetrable jungle. The rivers frequently form small deltas, and flow through marshy ground, an excellent breeding place for malaria and yellow fever. The *tierra templada*, or temperate tract, extends over the lower slopes of the hills. The vegetation is here sub-tropical, palms and conifers growing side by side. The trees grow to a good height, but the forests are far less dense and more easy to traverse than in the lowlands. Mahogany, cedar, sapodilla and the cohune palm flourish splendidly. Above this again comes the *tierra fria*, or cold region, which, in the case of British Honduras, is of subordinate





MAHOGANY TREE, BRITISH HONDURAS.

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importance, there being no highlands of any great extent in the colony. The heat is mitigated by the height above the sea, and the nights are frequently so cold that two or three thick blankets are needed to keep one warm in bed. It is open country for the most part, often of a desert character, and excessively dry. The conifers are almost entirely left behind, their place being taken by thorny scrub, or prickly cactus.

The rainy periods occur in regular succession, but are of unequal duration, commencing, moreover, at different times in low and higher regions. On the Atlantic side, the rainfall is as a rule more abundant than on the Pacific coast. Generally speaking, one may say that the winter and spring months are dry, the summer and autumn wet.

British Honduras was discovered by Columbus in 1502 on his fourth voyage, but the country was soon lost sight of in the wealth of new discoveries made about that time, and it was not until the middle of the seventeenth century that the first colonists proper found it anew, coming from Jamaica. The settlers soon got on good terms with the Indians and Caribs, and began to feel at home in the country. The forests of mahogany were the chief attraction, this species of timber commanding even at that early date a high price in the market.

The first to work these forests were Dutch and English ; the country had, however, been first

discovered by the Spaniards, and was thus, according to the simple mediæval code of international law, Spanish territory, even though no Castilian had ever set foot within its bounds. Not unnaturally, therefore, a state of unofficial war soon grew up in this remote corner of the world between the representatives of Latin and Anglo-Saxon race. The Indians, however, sided unreservedly with the English, who ultimately defeated the Spaniards in 1798 at the battle of St. George's Cay, and afterwards gradually ousted their former allies, the Dutch.

After this, the country more or less looked after itself, with a trifle of assistance now and again from the far-reaching power of Albion ; not until 1872 was it officially included among the British colonies as a subordinate province under Jamaica. This lasted until 1884, when the territory was declared of equal status with the other colonies, governed and administered directly from the Colonial Office.

It is an undoubted fact that this coast was entered on the map of the world at the commencement of the sixteenth century, and has belonged to England for a century or so, but it would seem doubtful, nevertheless, whether the English have even yet properly discovered this their own colony. The place is so remote, so ill-provided with communications, and so little known generally, that if one speaks of it to an English-

man, unless by accident he happens to have been there, or has relatives in the Colonial Office, he will stare at you, and ask in surprise :

“ You don’t say so ? Have we really taken over that little bit of a republic too ? ”

Thereby meaning the larger and better-known country of Spanish Honduras.

The ancient motto of the colony, “ *Sub umbra floreo*, ” seems indeed to have been chosen with a certain prophetic insight.

It is likely, however, that before very long the enormous resources and manifold possibilities of the country will be better appreciated. The sea swarms with fish ; on the coral reefs are palms heavy with coco-nuts ; bananas, sugar-cane, lemons, grape-fruit and pineapple grow as if they enjoyed it. The forests consist for the most part of mahogany or other valuable sorts of timber, while the uplands, where the climate is mild, afford extensive and luxuriant pasturage. All these are simply waiting to be turned to advantage by anyone with a little capital at his back, plenty of energy within, and sufficient time ahead.

First of all, however, the problem of communications must be solved.

At present the colony is practically destitute of railways, and the few ill-kept roads that exist are almost impassable during the rains. The rivers—winding, shallow, and broken by rapids—

are the only channels of access into the interior. They are used more especially for rafting timber ; if passengers or goods are to be transported any distance, it is a case of getting out canoes and paddling along—a mode of transit occupying many days, not to say weeks.

Intercourse with the outer world is also of the slightest, and is entirely in the hands of Americans. The wireless station at Belize carries only as far as Swan Island, and cables are sent by a tortuous route via Mexico and the United States, often involving a week or so's delay. Only exceptionally do English vessels in direct communication with Europe call at the port ; otherwise, both goods and passengers are carried by the United Fruit Company, a big Boston firm, which runs a line of fruit boats from Puerto Barrios (Guatemala) to New Orleans.

We had entertained but vague ideas as to what the capital would be like. Some of the party were of opinion that it was a little out-of-the-way hole, where we should probably have to pitch our own tent in the market-place, while others stoutly maintained that the city was quite a respectable metropolis, at any rate for these regions. The name Belize itself told us nothing—unless possibly it were to be regarded as a corruption of the Spanish *felice* (happy). If so, why, so much the better.

As it turned out, the respectable metropolis

theory was nearer the mark, albeit some considerable modification was required.

The city has 12,000 inhabitants, stone-paved, crooked streets, with planks laid down to bridge over the worst of the puddles, not to mention a real iron bridge, originally turnable, but now rusted fast, spanning the river, about which the houses are grouped in picturesque disorder. What more could one ask?

The ground on which it is built consists, according to a local authority, of mahogany baulks dumped down into the mud with a filling in between of empty gin bottles, so it should be pretty strong, being based on an extensive and hearty thirst. The main square is surrounded by the charred ruins of some official buildings; in front of these, where the fire was at its worst, the fire brigade now drives up each morning and parades its ultra-modern equipment—as a suitable demonstration, no doubt, and by way of warning not to do it again.

At the street corners one sees native police in the “Bobby” blue that now seems universal. Even the well-known blue and white badge of the London constable on duty has been adopted here also: why should Belize be behind? Motors rattle along over the rough paving, hooting and spitting, and driven very evidently to the public danger. But the guardian of law and order calmly turns his back and lights another

cigarette. There are plenty of people to run over, and should two vehicles happen to collide, why, better let the chauffeurs settle it between themselves.

Out along the main thoroughfares of the city, where holes in the roadway, as distinct from those in meaner streets, are invariably filled up after a year or so, one finds offices and business premises. The shops are remarkably well provided, but with a marked predominance of American goods—as might indeed be expected. The liveliest business, however, is transacted in the market-place, or square, where toothless old nigger women sit almost hidden behind piles of fish, fruit and vegetables. There is a haggling and gossiping and squabbling here fully equal to that of Munk-bron any morning; the manners and temper of a market-place are much the same all the world over.

Along the beach lie the merchants' villas, built for the most part in the well-known bungalow style, with broad verandas, and mosquito nets in place of windows. In the harbour, which has a depth of only a few feet, motor-boats and fishing craft lie rocking, while farther out, in the roads, are the schooners that ply along the coast between the coco-nut plantations. And over all wheel the fat pelicans, in profile resembling gigantic woodcock. Suddenly they seem to lose their balance and tumble headlong with a mighty



splash into the water, disappear for a moment, and then come up with a glistening fish in their beak. In order to swallow properly, and possibly to prolong the sensation of the moment, they stretch their necks upward like a greedy duck.

The principal buildings of the town are the churches and prison, the hospital, and St. John's College. There is also, of course, a sports ground, with golf links, tennis courts and football ground—indispensable items these to an Englishman's existence. And when the white men have not time to play, the natives understudy to the best of their ability.

The population is an unattractive hotch-potch of whites, Indians and negroes, with the races so effectively intermingled that it is impossible to say which is which. There are only a few hundred pure-blooded Europeans; from these, the colour scale descends through every imaginable shade to the blackest black. But all aspire to equal importance and consideration. It is unwise nowadays to tread on the toes of a nigger; he carries his case at once to a lawyer as black as himself—and in a trice there are legal proceedings to be faced. To an outsider, it seems incomprehensible that the English should so unreservedly have allowed this equality of race. But so it is to-day, and one may even see full-blooded negroes seated at the Government council table. The racial question in the New World is a desperately

complicated one, and every day sees it more insistently in the foreground. Mark Twain once declared that he would like to live a hundred years merely to see how America would manage to deal with that particular problem. He might well have included British Honduras.

The negroes, however, are childlike and good-natured, in contrast to that part of the population which has a touch of Indian blood in its veins. These are touchy and violent-tempered, and they never forget an injury. Four years ago the Swedish Consul, his secretary and a policeman were shot down in the street by an individual of this type, merely because he had lost a lawsuit in which the Consul had acted for his opponent. The murderer ended with his neck in a noose.

But such outrages as this are exceptional. Save for a small revolt last spring, when the black troops came home declaring that it was *they* who had won the war in Flanders, and demanding higher pay in consequence, life in the little town rolls on peacefully and calmly enough. On every side one may see the washing hung or spread on the ground to-day, with fowls and turkeys trampling unconcernedly over the linen; the children play in the gutter just as they do in every other properly appointed community. Nobody ever troubles about the future, but all take things as they come to-day. In the cool of the evening, one can go to the pictures, or sit at home on the

veranda. And then, perhaps, an old, ill-kept trumpet is brought out, and paterfamilias, his lips trembling with emotion, splutters out "Home, sweet Home." For the negroes are a musical people, and the trumpet is a favourite instrument with them.

Belize has only one hotel, and that so ancient and decayed that one can tickle the feet of the man up above through the cracks in the floor. We were the more pleased, therefore, when the Governor and the Swedish Consul offered, the very first evening, to take each half of our party under his care. To these two gentlemen, Mr. E. Hutson and J. Franco, I take this opportunity of offering our heartiest thanks for all their kindness, hospitality and assistance. Untiring were their efforts on our behalf. Always ready with information, always with a friendly smile, always finding time to spare for our affairs, however busy they might be with their own. Thanks to them, certain of our preparations for the Tuloom expedition were settled in a moment, and through the courteous offices of the Governor we found ourselves most kindly received wherever we set foot within the colony.

The Residency, or Government House, lay right on the beach, surrounded by green lawns, with ducks and fowls promenading as they pleased among the flower-beds. At the gate stood a British Tommy in khaki, as stiff as any sentinel

outside the Brandenburger Tor; and on the paths were half a dozen convicts busy weeding.

There is always a sense of comfort and ease in entering an English home, whether it be in Yorkshire or on the other side of the globe; for the English know how to bring comfort and convenience with them wherever they happen to be, at the same time excluding all that could disturb the harmony of family life. A Briton is always a Briton. Take a Swede from Småland and plant him in some English-speaking country, and in a very short time he will have adapted himself, in all externals, to the customs of the place, and speak English fluently if with an accent. But you would never find an Englishman so adapting himself as, for instance, to adopt the dress of the natives, or endeavour to speak the Småland dialect with a cockney accent. It is this disinclination towards everything alien which leads them to envelope themselves, wherever they may be, in an atmosphere of their own, forming a barrier which is not easily broken through, but on the other hand, once penetrated, leaves the way open to the warm heart of a congenial fellow-creature. Make an Englishman your friend, and that friendship will endure through fire and water.

The Governor of Belize was no exception in this respect. A winning personality, and a demon for work, who never knew what it was to be tired—a man to approach with respect. But when



THE RESIDENCY, BELIZE.

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the trying day's work was over, came a genial light in his eye, and nothing on earth could stand in the way of a quiet chat over a drink and a cigarette. Then the talk would generally turn on the Colony and its possibilities. He watched over it as his child, and was indefatigable in devising new schemes for its development and future. The labour question was his greatest difficulty, for, as he put it, when your black has earned the price of a pint of spirits, which he can do in a few hours, off he goes to get drunk, and declines to work further until he feels thirsty again. And how is a man to make anything out of a colony in a free country with that sort of freedom?

From information furnished by the Riksmuseum at Stockholm, and after consulting Mr. Maudslay, of London, one of the experts in the ancient culture of Central America, we had decided first of all to direct our endeavours towards Tuloom, in Yucatan.<sup>1</sup> This peninsula, which was the principal seat of Maya culture, is a perfect treasure-house of relics and remains. Most of them, however, are already accurately known inside and out, having been measured, charted and described both by English and Americans. Thus there was not much left to do. The ruined city of Tuloom,

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<sup>1</sup> The entire peninsula is generally called Yucatan. For administrative purposes, however, Tuloom is included in the province of Quintana Roo.

on the other hand, was relatively little known, partly owing to its desert situation, partly through the unreliable character of the Indians in the vicinity. Only a few scientists have been there. The Museum lacked reliable illustration material, and wished to have the place properly surveyed and photographed. Finally, there were said to be, in certain of the temples, fresco paintings, already badly damaged, which should be sketched before they were entirely destroyed by damp and mould.

Accordingly, we made our preparations to visit the place.

Tuloom is situated on the east coast of the Yucatan Peninsula, quite close to the sea. The route by land is difficult, the roads being almost impassable, and by no means safe. From the seaward, however, it should be comparatively easy of access. A fast motor-boat could cover the distance in a little over twenty-four hours, a schooner in two or three days. It looked simple enough on paper, but the reality proved by no means so easy. The Caribbean Sea is broad and deep, and, like in other waters, may be rough enough at times to be far from healthy for small craft. Finally, there is a scarcity of harbours, but an abundance of inadequately charted reefs and hungry sharks. In the tropics, moreover, one must be prepared for the most unexpected happenings—things which at home one would



never dream of taking into consideration on such a simple journey.

However, Tuloom was our nearest goal, and to Tuloom we would go.

After a few days in making arrangements with an American mahogany concern, which possessed a motor-boat of medium size, we managed to hire this craft for a journey along the coast. We got our tent and provisions on board, stowed a supply of petrol on deck, and about a week after arriving at Belize we were ready to make our departure.

The *Sam D. Spellman*—that was the name of the boat—lay waiting our pleasure in the harbour ; we had only to start her and be off.

In order, however, to give the reader some idea beforehand as to ancient Central America, we will leave the boat for a while, and devote ourselves to a brief survey of the history and culture of the Mayas. Those who are not interested in the subject are at liberty to skip the chapter if they please, and pass on to the next.

## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MAYAS.<sup>1</sup>

WHEN, or how, the New World became inhabited we do not know with certainty. It is generally supposed that a nomad people from Asia must have been the first to settle there, gradually after their occupation becoming cultivators of fixed abode. It is from this period, which is estimated at about 1,000 or 2,000 B.C., that the earliest finds of earthenware are derived. The relics consist of clumsy statuettes with grotesque heads, big bodies, long arms and shrunken legs. There are also tripod bowls of very simple workmanship. To a somewhat later period are ascribed the stone idols, which resemble the clay statuettes in form and naïve artistic effort.

The site of these finds, the earliest traces of ancient culture, ranges over a great part of both

### <sup>1</sup> SOURCES.

STEPHENS.—“Incidents of Travel in Yucatan.”

MAUDSLAY.—“A Glimpse at Guatemala.”

JOYCE.—“Central American Archæology.”

SPINDEN.—“Ancient Civilisations of Mexico and Central America.”

Peabody Museum Papers, Vol. VII.

MEANS.—“History of the Spanish Conquest of Yucatan and of the Itzas.”



EARTHENWARE CENSER WITH IDOL'S HEAD.

*(Interior of British Honduras.)*

*To face page 46.*



North and South America, but is mostly concentrated in Mexico and Central America itself. The relics are found as a rule in a gravelly stratum above which, in Mexico, the Toltec and Aztec remains occur.

In regard to language, it has been found possible to follow the old Nahuan tongue back to very early times ; this speech seems to have played a somewhat similar part among the races of the New World to that of the Indo-Aryan in Europe. It covered a geographical area of considerable extent.

Side by side with this, or possibly as a derivation, the Maya tongue was gradually developed—and a corrupted form of the latter is still spoken by over half a million people.

The date at which this people first appeared as a race of independent culture has never been definitely ascertained. The ciphers and dates of the ancient Maya inscriptions have, it is true, been deciphered to a certain extent, but it proved hard to find a fixed starting point which could be rendered in terms of our own reckoning of time. Broadly speaking, it is supposed that at the time of the birth of Christ, Maya culture extended throughout the whole of Yucatan, the provinces of Tabasco and Chiapas in Mexico, British Honduras, Guatemala, and the north of Spanish Honduras. Its origin lies far back in the mists of the past ; then at times it was influenced

by Toltecs and Aztecs, but developed later altogether independently, until the conclusion of the seventeenth century, when its independence ceased.

Roughly outlined, the history of the people is as follows :

### I. PERIOD OF FOUNDATION (? A.D. 200)

The two oldest dates in the Maya calendar refer to about 100 B.C. and A.D. 50. Development is seeking out lines of its own. The first hieroglyphics appear, and are gradually perfected.

### II. THE GOLDEN AGE, OR ANCIENT EMPIRE (A.D. 200-600)

The great cities, especially in the southern region, are built, flourish, and decline. Those of greatest influence were Quirigua, Copan, Nakum, Tikal, Ixkun, Palenque, Yaxchilan and others. The Petan district formed the approximate geographical centre.

From this period date many of the stateliest monuments. Huge burial mounds were thrown up, terraces were built, and on their summits artistically decorated temples were erected. Broad open spaces were used for public festivals, etc., and the squares were ornamented with carved blocks of stone and altars (the so-called steles, or monoliths).

Judging from these sculptures, etc., the life

of the period would seem to have been chiefly occupied in complicated religious ceremonies, which, under the leadership of a priestly caste, formed both the basis of government and the impulse to further development of the artistic talent which the people undoubtedly possessed. The superabundance of decoration often observable in their buildings and inscriptions must certainly be ascribed to the desire of reproducing minutely the many and various rites of the cult. It might almost be said that art developed, not for its own sake, but in order to provide the means of decorating the greatest possible number of wall spaces in the most intricate manner. Or, in other words, an all-pervading *horror vacui*.

### III. THE PERIOD OF COLONISATION (600-700)

For some reason unknown, the great cities to the south were given up. Possibly the domination of the priests had rendered life intolerable, or perhaps the soil had been impoverished by the primitive methods of agriculture then in use. Possibly, also, other peoples may have moved up and exerted pressure from the east or west. A general trend towards the north-west began to make itself apparent as far back as the middle of the sixth century; among other places, the great city of Chichen Itza, in Yucatan, was then founded, and became one of the nurseries of culture in the future Mayapan League.

From this period date the earliest historical documents.

#### IV. PERIOD OF TRANSITION (700-1000)

New cities and communities are formed in Yucatan. The chronicles state that the Mayas occupied the country of Chakanputun, thereby probably meaning the interior of the peninsula. About the year 1000, Uxmal, Chichen and Mayapan formed an alliance, the so-called Mayapan League, from which later grew the new empire.

#### V. THE PERIOD OF RENAISSANCE, OR SECOND EMPIRE (1000-1200)

The entire country gradually came under the influence of the Mayapan League, the rulers of which reigned despotically with the power and authority of emperors.

It is difficult to form any true idea as to the grouping of the political powers. It is presumed that Mayapan, Chichen and Uxmal had each its reigning dynasty. Under these came so-called batabs, governing various parts of the country from the smaller cities, for account of their rulers ; below these again a staff of minor officials. Architecture certainly flourished at this period, but was simpler than before. Geometrical figures are now more and more frequently met with in the decorative designs.



## VI. THE TOLTEC PERIOD (1200-1400)

Though the actual happenings which preceded the downfall of the Mayapan League are a matter of doubt, the direct cause which led to its dissolution is known. The ruler of the state of Mayapan was suddenly seized with a desire to extend his territories at the expense of the others. He therefore raised a body of Mexican mercenaries, and with the aid of these troops soon brought the whole south of Yucatan under his sway, but was forced, by way of compensation, to give up Chichen Itza to his allies. From this period date some of the finest monuments of this city, such as the Ball-ground and the smaller Citadel, the decoration of which shows distinct evidences of Toltec influence.

Violent internecine wars now soon commenced to rage, and the oppressed territories endeavoured to free themselves from the tyranny of Mayapan. Descendants of the rulers of Uxmal in particular were foremost among the opposition. Not until 1450, however, was the despotic power overthrown. In this year Mayapan was captured, and destroyed completely, the foreign usurpers being driven across the frontier. And here the most brilliant period of Maya culture comes to an end.

VII. THE MODERN PERIOD (1450 TO THE  
PRESENT DAY)

After the fall of Mayapan, the whole of Yucatan broke up into minor states. No centralised

government now existed, and the lack of a powerful hand maintaining unity was felt. Where formerly a single chieftain had held sway, were now a dozen, all constantly at war with one another. The ancient cities were deserted or burned down, new ones were built, but of less extent and with inferior architecture.

Culture was now on the decline, education lapsed into neglect. True, the chieftains and priests still continued to instruct the people in the complicated beliefs of their fathers, and temples were still used for religious sacrifices, but all was now on a smaller scale, and the few remaining centres of culture worked without any system of co-operation. At the time of the Spanish invasion Yucatan was but a shadow of its former self.

Maya power endured longest in the Peten district, where the scions of Itza gradually assembled and founded the city of Tayasal on the shores of Lake Peten. These resisted stubbornly the onslaught of the Spaniards. Not until 1697 was the city destroyed by Don Martin de Ursua, Governor of Yucatan, and with its fall the influence of the Mayas upon history is at an end.

In our day only legends and superstitions still exist among the people from the time when their forefathers occupied so prominent a place in the history and culture of the New World. Only far

up in the highlands is it possible still to trace some traditions dating back to the period of power. It is possible, but hardly likely, that the ravages of the Spaniards crushed a civilisation which might otherwise have attained greater results had it been allowed to continue. For, as already shown, the decline set in as far back as the fifteenth century, i.e. before the conquest of America was even thought of. The climax was already passed ; the golden age was over ; and judging by similar instances of decline in the history of other peoples, it would never have returned.

The Mayas built their artistically ornamented edifices as a rule surrounding an open space or square. A high terrace of great extent formed the centre of the city, and on this site were built the temples, on their separate smaller terraces. These temples were rectangular in shape, with a varying number of entrances, to which broad stairways led up. The interior consisted of a hall, or several, according to the size of the building ; the innermost invariably formed the sacred chamber, with an altar set up against one wall.

The so-called palaces were small houses of irregular design, containing a number of smaller chambers formed by partitions arbitrarily disposed. In all probability they served as residences for the chiefs and priests. The remaining population lived in huts of plaited palm.

All the more considerable buildings were constructed of limestone and mortar. The outer faces of the walls were dressed and ornamented, the inner sides generally left rough, but occasionally decorated with frescoes. The rooms, rarely exceeding four metres across, were to a certain extent arched, inasmuch as the two roof-sides sloped together, meeting in a blunt point, the opening being covered with flat stone flakes. The sides were always straight, thus forming a square with an equilateral triangle above. Despite these sloping ceilings, however, the outside nevertheless formed a four-cornered figure, the space between the roof-ridge and the walls, which rose to the same height, being filled up with stone and mortar. Above the flat roof was occasionally set a high perforated upper ridge; less frequently, another dwelling place with interior chambers.

The older the temple, the more realistic were the ornaments of its façade. Grotesque figures, human bodies, serpents and other beasts were favourite motives. At a later period these gradually gave way to geometrical figures.

It was not only architecture, however, which reached a high standard in respect of decorative art. Ceramic and textile work were similarly favoured. In earthenware, there were bowls, dishes, tall cylindrical vessels, bottle-shaped vases, censers, etc., mostly ornamented with a frieze or



TYPICAL FAÇADE, SERPENT DESIGN.

(Photo: Maler.)



RECONSTRUCTED MAYA CITY.

(After sketch and model by Maudslay.)

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design representing spirits, priests, warriors, serpents, birds, or mystical signs and hieroglyphics. Where colour was used, the ground tint was orange, the outlines being drawn in black, with details in red, brown or white. Judging from the scenes depicted on some of the better-preserved monuments, textiles were also of very delicate workmanship, in varied patterns; basket-work, too, appears to have been carried on to a great extent, and with good results. Personal ornaments were made of a green stone, similar to nephrite; metals, on the other hand, were rare.

Of all beasts, the serpent especially was conventionalised to an altogether fantastic extent. The head was generally shown with gaping mouth, the jaws, fangs and tongue prolonged to infinity. Characteristic attributes proper to other animals were sometimes introduced, as, for instance, feathers of the long-tailed quetzal, jaguar's teeth, etc. Finally, the human figure also was used for such ornamentation in detail, ear and nose-rings, head-dresses, hands and other members being used, and a human face set midway between the reptile's open jaws. The purpose of this may originally have been to express the intelligence of the creature; after a time, however, it came to be used merely as a decorative setting for the heads of the various deities.

From the purely artistic point of view, the

hieroglyphic writing attained the highest development, though here also influenced by the serpent idea. Here, however, where it was a question of filling a given and restricted space with a certain sign, the form became more concentrated and the composition itself better worked out. In this respect, the Mayas can, without exaggeration, be compared to the Egyptians or the Chinese.

Reproductions of the human figure fall into three groups: those of captives, chieftains and priests. The first-named are shown in a bowed or prostrate position, with the naked foot of the conqueror on their necks. Chieftains and priests are difficult to distinguish one from another, the chieftain probably himself also filling the office of high priest. Such figures are shown with an enormous head-dress of plumes, and bearing in their hands weapons or other signs of their dignity. The face is occasionally hidden by a mask, representing one of the many gods, which gives rise to further complications.

This brings us to the question of religion.

The Maya cult was of an unparalleled intricacy and abounding in symbolism. The serpent occurs everywhere as a token of divinity. It is often shown with two heads, and, as already mentioned, with the head of an idol between its gaping jaws. Dragons too, however, were portrayed in like connection, while grotesque figures, half beast, half human, occupy a prominent place.

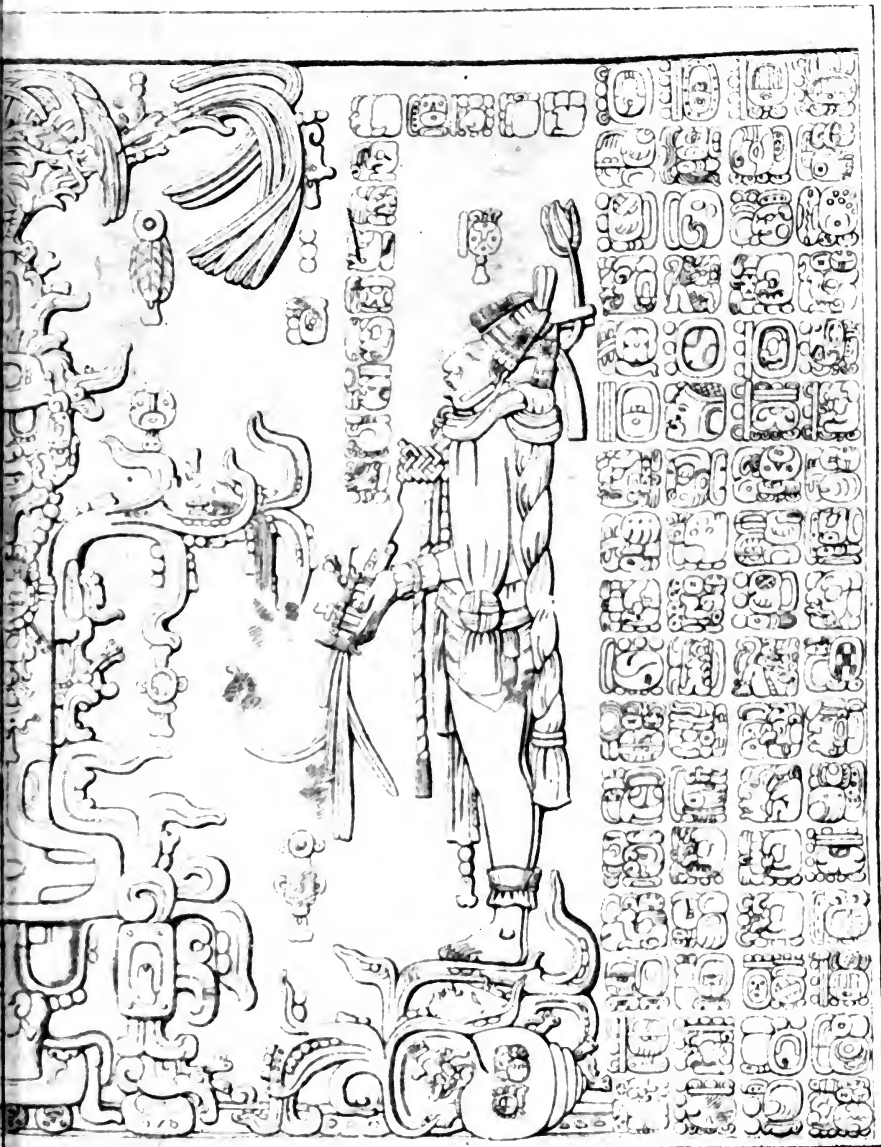






(After Maudslay.)

SPECIMEN OF DECORATIVE ART, WITH F



RES AND HIEROGLYPHICS, FROM PALENQUE.

*To appear between pages 56/57.*



The general religious conception was strictly dualistic, every good spirit having its corresponding evil one to counteract its influence. Highest of all the deities was Itzamna, the origin of all things, giver of life and light, knowledge and power, taking at the same time a place similar to that of Zeus in the Greek Pantheon. He is represented as an aged man with aquiline nose and toothless gaping mouth. Occasionally the face is framed in a constellation of the sun, moon and other heavenly bodies, with further symbols which have not been interpreted. It is his head which is most frequently found in the stereotype serpent's jaw motive.

In connection with Itzamna, but in all things his opposite, is mentioned an old woman furnished with qualities making for destruction. Her head ornament consists of serpents.

Almost equally prominent is the place occupied by the god Kukulcan, or the feathered serpent. His grinning mask is shown on the faces of warriors and chieftains, whence he has generally been taken as the god of war. Kukulcan, however, also occurs in conjunction with the signs for maize and water, suggesting some connection with fertility, and he was very likely the source of floods and rainfall. The figure in which he is represented is something between a human being and a serpent, often transformed into a dwarf sceptre, held outstretched in the hand.

His opposing deity was the god of poison, represented with a fleshless lower jaw, the sign of the sun on his forehead, and various other undeciphered symbols about his head.

Ahpuch, the Lord of Death, was leader of the powers of evil. He is portrayed as a creature partly in skeleton—the head a naked skull, but with ears attached, the back and chest skeleton only, but the extremities fleshy, though abnormally long. There are black lines running hither and thither across the body, and the cheek had two eyelike rings with a stroke between.

Yum Kax, the god of the harvest, was closely related to the foregoing; his symbol is the sign for maize, but his functions otherwise doubtful.

Finally came a number of minor deities, of which the following should be mentioned:

Ek Ahu, or the Black Chief; Ixchel, or the goddess of the rainbow, wedded to Itzamna; Ixtyban, the tutelary goddess of sculptors; Ichebelyax, the patron saint of the weavers; a mystic being, related to the Polestar, with growth-gods, fish, leather, and jaguar gods, and many others.

Closely related to religion was the reckoning of time, in which the Mayas were masters. Thanks to the study of the three known MSS.—the Dresden Codex, the Codex Peresianus, and the Codex Cortesianus—compared with the books of Chilán Balam, a sort of chronicle in the Maya tongue, but written in mediæval Spanish characters, it

has proved possible to decipher a number of the hieroglyphs, especially those referring to figures, days, months and longer periods of time.

The formation of the calendar was based upon three facts: astronomical observation, numeral figures, and the possibility of so moving these about as to give certain series. Even the Nahuatl people had already a sort of chronology, *tonalamatl*, with series of thirteen and twenty. These were:

1. Imix.	11. Chuen.
2. Ik.	12. Eb.
3. Akbal.	13. Ben.
4. Kan.	14. Ix.
5. Chicchan.	15. Men.
6. Cimi.	16. Cio.
7. Manik.	17. Caban.
8. Lamat.	18. Eznab.
9. Muluc.	19. Cauac.
10. Oc.	20. Ahau.

The two series inter-operate like a pair of wheels, one with thirteen cogs for numerals, and one with twenty for the names of days. The numeral wheel counts twenty while the other only thirteen, and not until after  $13 \times 20$  revolutions do we get a repetition of the same name at the same number. This provided the basis of a year of 260 days.

The Mayas developed this system further, and

established, first, a lunar calendar of twelve months and thirty days, or 360 days to the year ; the number of days, however, was later altered to twenty instead of thirty, and the number of months increased to eighteen, thus maintaining the total of 360 days. After a time, an extra month of five days was interpolated, and even leap year was considered, albeit not included in the calendar, which was thus now based upon the sun.

The nineteen months were named as follows ;

1. Pop.	11. Zac.
2. Uo.	12. Ceh.
3. Zip.	13. Mac.
4. Zotz.	14. Kankin.
5. Tzec.	15. Muan.
6. Xul.	16. Pax.
7. Yaxkin.	17. Kayab.
8. Mol.	18. Cumhu.
9. Chen.	19. Uayeb (five
10. Yax.	days).

Now since the months contained twenty days, and tonalamatl the same number of names, each day would fall into the same place were it not for the surplus five. Thus, after a year, the days' names have advanced five steps, but after the lapse of four years, they are once more at their initial figure.



## BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MAYAS 61

But this was not all. Each day's name was, as already indicated, connected with a certain figure in tonalamatl, and could be shifted thirteen times. This rendered it possible to predict that a certain day with a certain number could only occupy the same place in the month after  $13 \times 4$ , or fifty-two years. This series of  $265 \times 52$ , or 18,980 days, was the grand calendar itself, and the date was stated, for instance, in the following manner: 11 Ahau 18 Mac, indicating that the day Ahau with index number 11 occurred on the 18th of the month of Mac.

The numerals were written with strokes and dots from 0 to 19, and the system of reckoning is accordingly based on 20 and multiples of the same. This is expressed by setting a special sign, or periodoglyph, beside the figure, but in reckoning time, the third power (400) was replaced by 360, presumably because this value came nearest to the number of days in the year. We thus obtain the series 1, 20, 360, 7,200 and 144,000, the periods being named:

Kin :	1 day.
Uinal :	20 days.
Tun :	360 days.
Katun :	7,200 days, and
Cycle :	144,000 days.

A number, say 1,388,308, would thus be read as follows: nine cycles, twelve katuns, sixteen

tuns, seven uinals and eight kins. It is in this manner we find their system of chronology indicated both on the monuments and frequently also in the literature dealing with such questions.

Besides this solar calendar, which developed parallel with the first lunar reckoning, there was also a system of chronology based on the orbit of the planet Venus. The point is mentioned solely as evidence of the high degree of astronomical knowledge possessed by the Mayas.

This, however, is all that modern times have been able to decipher of their hieroglyphics. No Rosetta Stone has yet been found to reveal the secrets of the symbols. Save for the signs for certain deities, the four weather quarters, the sun, moon, Venus, the Polestar and a few altogether realistic images of natural things, the rest is wrapped in darkness. There is thus a rich field of research here open to the investigator ; riddles of a past age, which none as yet have been able to solve, wait to be brought to light.

Little is known as to the manner of life in earliest times. The Spaniards were the first to bring any report of this remarkable people over to Europe, and their accounts give the manners and customs at the time of the Spanish discovery. All that concerns time prior to this lies for the most part beyond our knowledge. It may be well, then, to conclude this chapter with a few brief extracts from one of these historians.

Senor Diego Cagolludo writes, in his work on the Mayas of Yucatan, *inter alia*, as follows :

“ Their money consists of small copper bells, valued according to their size, and a kind of red sea-shells, bought in some distant country, and which it was their habit to thread upon strings, after the manner of a rosary. They have likewise money of cocoa-beans, used chiefly in trading, and certain precious stones, besides copper plates, brought from Spain, which they barter for other wares. . . .

“ On the occasion of great festivals it is their habit to scrape their breasts, arms and thighs with small, sharp stones ; and this to such a degree that blood flows freely ; into the wounds so made they rub black earth or powdered charcoal. After such scraping with knives, the scars would remain, in the form of eagles, serpents, birds and the like ; they also pierced their noses. . . .

“ At the time when they were still heathen they would dance and sing after the manner of the Mexicans, and had then, as to this day, a leader of the choir, who also determined what was to be sung ; him they honour and reverence, giving him a place of honour in their temples and at their meetings and wedding feasts. They call him Holpop, and in his charge are the pauks and tuncules, and other instruments,

such as flutes, small trumpets, tortoise-shells, and others which they use. The tuncul is made of thick wood, and some of them so large that they can be heard for two miles with a favouring wind. To the accompaniment of these instruments they sing their songs and ancient legends. . . .

“The Indians of this country were, and are, very skilful with the bow and arrow; they are also mighty hunters, and breed also dogs for the pursuit of deer, boar, badger, tigers, a small kind of lion, rabbits, armadillos, iguanas and other beasts. With their arrows they shoot peacocks, some birds which they call faysanes (pheasants), and many others.

“At the present time they are greatly skilled in imitating every conceivable kind of handicraft, and thus learn all trades with ease. Apart from those living in the capitals and elsewhere, there are many Indians in the villages who are excellent smiths, tanners, shoemakers, carpenters and joiners, sculptors, saddlers, and artisans fashioning curious articles of shell, masons, stonecutters, tailors, painters, and what not. A matter of surprise is that many Indians work at four or six trades at once, where a Spaniard would have but one. . . .

“They wear garments of white cotton, which material they fashion into shirts, knee-

breeches, a kind of cloak or mantle, a vara<sup>1</sup> and a half square, which they call tilmas, or hayantes. These can be made into collars by drawing the two corners over the shoulders and tying together; a great number, also, wear such garments fashioned of a very stiff woven wool; many, also, from material bought in Spain, such as damask and other kinds of silk. Some wear jackets, and some wear shoes or sandals of hemp. The general custom, however, is to go barefoot, especially within doors and on service, but this is not the case with certain of the Caciques and prominent men, as also women. Most of the men wear hats of straw or palm leaf, and at the present time, many purchase hats of felt. The women wear uaipiles, that is, a garment falling from the neck to midway down the leg, with an opening above through which the head can be thrust, and two slits also at the sides for the arms, which are protected for half their length. This garment, not being girdled at the waist, serves also as a shirt. From the waist to the foot comes another garment, called pic, this resembling a dress, and being worn under the outer garment. Most of them are embroidered with blue and red thread, giving them a pleasing appearance. . . ."

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<sup>1</sup> Ancient Spanish measure,

## MAÑANA—AND LATER, TULOOM

THE motor boat *Sam D. Spellman* lay ready, then, a little way up the river at Belize.

"Half speed ahead!" hailed the bronzed Captain down the speaking tube. "Full!"

The engines moved, but not the boat.

"Back, you loony, full speed astern," shouted the master. "Can't you see we're aground?"

"Starboard your helm."

"No, port, you everlasting fool!"

"Massa, right side no good."

"Hold your jaw, we're going left."

"Yes, but fore-part going right, then back going left."

"Idiot, we've got to back her off."

"Ah, yes, that's the way, I see."

And his face beamed all over with understanding.

"Go ahead again now!" cried the master. "And back and forth again by turns."

"Massa no quite right in head," murmured the black, but obeyed all the same. One thing upsetting the other.

The engines sighed, spluttered and ground, the propeller lashed up foam. It is not so easy to

manage a boat drawing six foot, with only five foot of water under her keel and the rest mud.

Accordingly, we hung about for best part of half an hour, when a burly engineer thrust his head through a skylight and said :

“ Him pipe all choke with mud. And bearings hot. Have to give little rest and cool down. Then go on again.”

Followed a silence as of death in the engine-room, after the recent din. The bearings were cooling down.

“ Oh, send for a tug,” decided the master. “ We’ll have the tide turning soon, and then we’ll have to wait till to-morrow.”

It was a hot afternoon, the sun blazing down, and the sand flies biting neck and arms, leaving their little red visiting cards under the skin. Each of us was surrounded with a cloud of tobacco smoke, to keep them off.

“ Well, this is a nice beginning,” some one observed.

“ Might be worse,” opined another. “ Hi, you there on shore, cut along to the nearest bar and bring cold drinks.”

In a little while the boy returned with the desired refreshment.

“ *Salud !* No danger, anyway, as long as we’re in touch with land ! ”

That drink and several others were consumed before the heated bearing had cooled its injured

feelings, but by that time the tug had arrived on the scene.

"Try again," muttered the owner. "I swear the tide's on the turn already."

Renewed efforts. Shouting and hailing, broken hawsers, fingers jammed, motors puffing and snorting. Port and starboard with the helm; go ahead for all you're worth, astern for all you're worth, stop for all you're worth.

The sun was already touching the horizon when a last mighty heave brought the vessel clear. The mud gave up its hold reluctantly, but the keel was free. Another half-hour's delay, and we should have had to spend the night there.

Dr. Hemmendorff stood waving farewell from the shore. With deep regret we had been obliged to leave him there, the climate having so affected his health that he was forced to book his passage on the first homeward boat. It was a great disappointment to lose the cheerful and kindly scientist, whose bright ideas and inexhaustible humour had so often shortened the hours of the voyage hitherto. And apart from that—the irreparable loss to the scientific results of the expedition! He was the expert who should have carried out the exact investigations, both botanical and archæological, on the spot. Now, we were left to make the best we could of our own inadequate knowledge. We consoled ourselves, however, with the thought that Professor Hartman,



as arranged, would soon arrive at Belize, and relieve us from all further anxiety on that head. Our present journey to Tuloom must, therefore, be regarded as a preliminary reconnaissance, to get some idea of the place and prepare the way for the Professor. In a few days, at latest, we expected to be back with good news. Here, however, we were reckoning without our host.

We made out to sea at good speed. The evening was fine and calm, the sea smooth as glass. The setting sun showed the low coral reefs that run all along the coast of British Honduras, with a green wealth of coco palms and mangroves ; now and again a fish leaped across our bows, or a pelican dived headlong into our wake. We cleared the last reefs just in time, before the dark set in. Ahead, the sea lay black and gleaming.

The *Spellman* was by no means an uncomfortable boat. The engine, that had resigned itself to its fate after the first demonstration, ran now smoothly and regularly as clockwork. There was a little cabin forward, and room for a crew of four ; aft there was a big saloon with dining table, lavatory and berths ; close by was the galley and the cook's pantry.

On the fore bulkhead hung a collection of coloured photographs, well framed, and evidently set up with affectionate care. The subjects were such as one sees on post-cards in a third-rate

tobacco shop dealing chiefly in prohibited literature. And in the middle of the wall, surrounded by this harem, was a large portrait of Sam D. Spellman himself, a solemn-looking gentleman in a long frock coat and a made-up tie. He was one of the Company's directors in New York, had never set foot on board, and looked more like a strict Presbyterian village minister than anything else. The expression on his furrowed face was one of deeply tragic, gentle disapproval, exactly as if he were saying: "Lead us not into temptation. . . . I assure you, gentleman, this company's none of my choosing!"

The Americans have their own peculiar taste. But why expose an apparently respectable ship-owner to blatant immorality?

The night was stiflingly hot for those who had elected to sleep under cover. Next morning the vessel was dancing recklessly in a stiff head sea and a strong northerly breeze. No land in sight.

This looked somehow suspicious. We were to have hugged the shore all along, as closely as possible, not to lose our bearings.

The pilot stood at the wheel, picking his nose, a habit of his when thinking. His face was one of earnest meditation now.

"Where are we now?"

"No can say exactly."

"But there's no land in sight!"

"No—o—o. . . . That dam compass all wrong,

for sure. Rotten thing, never use him any more."

"What do you reckon to go by, then?"

"Sun and stars—and feel the way."

"Where are we making for now?"

"Nearest land."

I glanced at the compass; it was pointing N.E., but Yucatan must lie due west—that is, over eight points out.

"Has that thing always been like that?"

"No—o—o."

"What's that box thing underneath?"

"That's over the steering gear. After last voyage we put in iron instead of wood, and wire rope 'stead of hemp."

Heavens alive! After that, what could anyone expect from a compass of ordinary intelligence?

Far out off the southern boundary of Yucatan lies a wide-branching coral-reef, called Chinchorro, generally dreaded on account of its treacherous shoals, and doubly perilous at night, owing to the lack of proper lighting. When, after a few hours, we sighted land again, it was seen that we had managed to pass outside instead of inside the reef, and had really been steering towards Cuba all night. Still, it was fortunate that the compass showed as far out as it did, or there would have been little left of the vessel. Hard coral is by no means good for thin wooden bottoms.

We got back into our proper course again after a time, and followed the desolate coast of Yucatan to the northward. The wind was freshening more and more, and huge clouds were banking up ahead; everything seemed to indicate a coming storm.

“ Looks like a gale coming up there, what ? ”

“ *Norte*, Massa,” answered the pilot with the greatest calm. “ Have to put in anywhere we can before it starts for good.”

The sky grew ever darker, the clouds banked heavier; far to the north, one could see through the glasses already how the rain stood like a dense impenetrable wall. To the landward, the broad Bahia de la Ascension opened out.

“ Port ! ” yelled the pilot in the helmsman’s ear; already the wind was howling so that one could scarcely hear oneself speak.

We steered straight towards a white line of breakers that ran far out to sea.

“ Can we get through there ? ”

“ Hope so. Get through mos’ time,” shouted the pilot. And he thrust another finger in his nose.

This did not sound particularly cheering. Nearer and nearer came the white line; we could hear the roar of the breakers now. The foam seethed, whirled about in flakes, spurted high and was torn to shreds by the gale. At one point however, there was a narrow gap in the line, and for this we steered.

The water raged and boiled and swirled about on either side as we crossed the white threshold, but once inside, it was almost perfectly calm, and the great shallow bay spread out like a huge green Brussels carpet, the white sandy bottom showing through beneath, alternating with dark patches of weed. The rolling ceased abruptly. Dangerously shallow it looked all round, but the pilot wormed his way in without slackening speed, steering by the different shades of colour in the water. This was so clear, that the very fact made it difficult to judge the depth, which was generally greater than it seemed.

"Plenty water here," the pilot kept on saying, but only to turn aside sharply next minute to avoid what looked like a shoal ahead.

We got in under the lee of Allen Point, a low spit of land with a light that was said to burn whenever the lighthouse keeper happened to be in the neighbourhood, and here we anchored. We got up a hastily contrived canvas shelter for the rain, and hardly was it finished when the storm burst on us in earnest.

These *nortes*, as they are called, come down from the Gulf of Mexico, often during the dry season as well, and are of excessive violence. The sky seemed to hang like a black bag above our heads, so low that it almost looked if one could reach it with outstretched hand. The rain poured down in torrents, not in drops as

we are used to see it at home, but in huge solid cascades ; with now and then a flash of lightning and a crash of thunder breaking through. The storm was howling full-voiced, and the whole expanse of Ascension Bay looked like one seething cauldron. Darkness came down, and a worse night it would be hard to imagine.

A storm of this kind generally lasts three days ; on this occasion, however, it was content with two. Still, it was not altogether calm when, after twenty-four hours enforced inaction, we got up anchor once more. But the sun at any rate was breaking through now and again, and we had no time to lose. From the shelter of the creek one could see how the sea ran far and high outside the reef.

The pilot, by way of a change, scratched his woolly pate as he neared the gap, and put on a serious face.

“ Don’ know if we’ll manage it to-day.”

“ Why not ? ”

“ This time have to go through another place, only eight foot of water there, and ship draws six. Water runs very fierce on the reef, and a sharp fall just outside. If we hit anything—all up then.” And he pointed eloquently to the fin of a shark sticking up to windward.

“ Well, we’ll try it anyway. It doesn’t look so very bad.”

“ If you say so, Massa. You give order.”

And so the matter was decided—unquestionably to his advantage.

Two foot is not much to spare in a rough sea. We looked at one another. Would she strike? We were just at the critical point now. The current here was decidedly unpleasant, and on either side of us roared the breakers. Anxiety was at its height.

A plunge and a scrape—and the vessel drove her stem straight down the hollow of the first wave on the farther side of the reef.

“Shouldn’t care to try that again,” said one.

But the pilot had actually paled under his black skin.

The sea proved considerably rougher than we had imagined, but the *Spellman* took it bravely. All thought of making Tuloom in such weather, however, was out of the question. The coast there is perfectly open, and one can only land in a calm. We therefore decided to go on to Cozumel instead, half a day’s run across, and wait for better times. We should be in shelter there, and the anchorage of San Miguel was counted safe enough.

Visibility was poor, the sky darkened, and the wind was getting up again. But it was too late to turn back now. Soon Allen Point was lost to sight in the mist, and we were out at sea once more with a useless compass and a pilot who navigated, as it seemed, by second sight.

In about three hours we should sight the southern point of Cozumel. By that time all who could stand on their feet were up on deck, staring for a sight of land till their eyes watered. But there was nothing to be seen. Another hour passed, and still an empty and ever darkening horizon met our gaze. It was depressing, to say the least.

The blacks shook their heads doubtfully. If we made too far to the southward, we should miss the island, and have to lie out all night in the heavy sea. The pilot's finger dug more zealously than ever into alternate nostrils.

It was two hours past the time now; things were looking serious. Then the captain clambered up to the roof of the charthouse, and lay flat on his stomach; it was impossible to stand upright. A moment later came a piercing hail:

"Land!"

Columbus could hardly have been more delighted at sight of the shores of America.

The niggers hopped on one leg; we ourselves felt overjoyed. The Caribbean is wide, and it was a long way to Cuba. . . .

Gradually Cozumel showed up out of the mist—not precisely on the quarter we had expected, but that was a detail; the main thing was that it was there. We altered our course accordingly, and just as dark was falling, the miniature city of San Miguel came in sight. And soon the



*Spellman* lay at anchor, resting after a fatiguing day.

The little place looked quite picturesque, lying there spread along the shore, in a setting of luxuriant green and swelling coco-nut palms. The houses showed clear white in the gloom, the clock in a slender belfry struck six. And at that moment, as if by magic, a row of glittering lights flashed out.

"Impossible! You don't mean to say they've electric light in this little hole?"

But it could hardly be anything else. And we stared in astonishment at the lights. Not to be outdone, however, we lit all the ship's lanterns and flash-lamps, hoisted the Swedish, American and Mexican colours—the last-named on a boat-hook—so as to be on the safe side, and got out a gramophone, which was soon grinding out the latest fox trots from New York. It was a fine evening, and we were in no hurry to go ashore.

Then the cook came aft, his eyes twinkling, and with an air of importance.

"Not go ashore, Master, and see the feast? Big feast this time, started on Sunday, and they keep it up three days. I've been there before myself. It's the last evening, sure."

"Why, of course! Why didn't you spit it out before? Get out the dinghy, and you can row us ashore and show the way.

But before our boat was ready, another

craft, cranky and dangerously full, had come alongside. Out of it stepped gravely the city fathers and festival committee, whose spokesman, placing himself squarely on the cabin roof, proceeded to deliver a speech, in Spanish. It sounded like abracadabra cockadoodledo, for our linguistic attainments were as yet of a very limited character. We managed, however, to make out that they bade us welcome to the island, and would be glad to see us at their festival. None of the reverend señores spoke English, so we answered in pure Swedish that we should feel greatly honoured. They appeared to have expected as much, and indicated by signs that there was room in the boat.

Since, however, the craft in question was not built for more than six at the outside, and already had a complement of ten, we judged it safer to take the dinghy. A Spanish vocabulary in one pocket, and a pistol in the other completed our hasty toilet, and the two boats rowed in side by side.

The landing stage was in darkness.

*"Atencion, senor !"*

And care, indeed, was needed, for about every third plank was missing, and we had to balance our way along those that remained. Close at hand the power-house motor was coughing in its hiding place. At whose expense this piece of luxury had been installed was never quite determined,

It is said, however, that the cost was written off as for charitable purposes.

Outside the ball-room all was life and movement. Tiny stalls with coloured paper lanterns stood in a long row, inviting purchases of sweetmeats, paper flowers and Chinese crackers. There was also a lottery, where one could try one's luck for a maximum stake of five cents. It was the younger generation mostly, which gave way to this reckless gambling; the boys stood in a double queue, chattering all at once, and getting up a little fight now and then over the winnings.

Inside, the hall was a blaze of light. Long strings of greenish white paper flags hung from the roof, each flag cut to the shape of a short pair of drawers, while the walls were hung with a series of portraits, representing the presidents of the republic. As these change pretty frequently, the gallery was extensive and impressive. The orchestra was set up on a raised platform, and consisted of a fiddle, a concertina and a drum. The musicians had been playing and drinking hard for three days, so it was not surprising that they dropped off to sleep regularly between the dances. The atmosphere was saturated with perfume, mixed exhalations, and the odour of garlic, in about equal parts.

And here were assembled all that the little community could boast of rank and aristocracy.

Here sat the Mayor and his fat Señora, with the local grocer between them, conversing excitedly on a bench ; there was the local policeman, with a pretty girl on his arm. A little farther off was the innkeeper with his quiverful, holding the youngest in his arms while his lady danced. In one corner stood an individual who, as we were informed, combined the functions of tailor, schoolmaster and lighthouse-keeper, delivering what, from his excited gestures, appeared to be a political harangue, while immediately opposite, a semi-intoxicated customs official mumbled a maudlin song, offering improper post-cards to all who cared to look.

For the rest, the sexes appeared to keep to themselves during the intervals ; then, when the music struck up, there was a sort of general post, and a rush for partners. The step-dancing was as regular as ever one sees it at home, giving place now and again to a more rhythmical, gliding dance, called simply *danzano*, and said to originate from Cuba.

The women moved very gracefully. Their features were regular, though coarse. They wore a huge comb stuck in the hair *à l'espagnol*, and an orange-blossom behind one ear. Neck and arms were loaded with a mass of imitation pearls and equally genuine precious stones. The costumes were many-coloured and gaudy, covered with sequins or cheap lace stitched on anyhow,

As for the men, their appearance was more or less in accordance with the general idea of a Mexican ; small of stature, dark-hued and dirty. Their dress, by no means clean, was cut according to the European fashion, all the colour in which they so delight being concentrated in a single feature, the neckcloth, which was of a glaring red, a venomous green or a blazing yellow—or all three together for choice.

We stood for a while uncertain as to what would be expected of four strangers from the north in this company, where we knew no one, and where all had evidently made up their parties for the evening. This state of things, however, lasted only till the next dance, when the lighthouse-keeper—himself a cavalier in obvious high favour, resolutely grasped a dark-eyed beauty by the arm, and dragging her unwillingly across the floor, signed to us that we were to dance. According to the strict Spanish etiquette of the ball-room, it was impossible to refuse ; it only remained to dash headlong in among the whirling couples and endeavour as far as possible to make a Swedish step dance fit in with the San Miguel trot.

Choreographically, the attempt was perhaps not altogether a success, but as a sudorific, it was all that could be desired. One could almost have sworn there must be a pool around us when we finally stopped and stood looking foolishly at

one another's heated faces. What was the proper thing to say, now?

Out with the Spanish vocabulary.

But there is nothing fluent or easy about a conversation carried on in that fashion. While one is looking up the phrase appropriate to the occasion, one comes upon a host of others, but never the right one. And it hardly does to begin with the first sentence that comes along—as for instance:

“Our neighbour's daughter, with whom we spoke yesterday, died last night.” It is too depressing.

Fortunately, an angel of deliverance appeared in the person of the mayor, who, with a glance at our wet handkerchiefs, sympathetically suggested:

“*Whisky?*”

Here at least was a word of international significance.

Acting on his hint, we went through into an adjoining room, which turned out to be the saloon bar and ladies' toilet in one. And here, surely enough, we found whisky in plenty—but water—Never!

It was not long before we had made the acquaintance of half the city. The fun increased every minute, as did the number of intoxicated gentlemen. We judged it best to make for our waiting dinghy before the inevitable free fight, with which

every respectable *baile* properly concludes. But long after the lights were out in our cabin we could hear the laughter and shouting and music from the shore, the festival continuing until cockcrow.

Next day the whole city was suffering from a bad head. An oppressive dullness hung over the entire community. The streets were deserted; only the pigs and fowls walked at their ease on the pavements, grunting and strutting as if the place belonged to them alone. If by chance one encountered a passer-by, he would mutter something unintelligible, and put his hand with a meaning gesture to his brow.

The great plaza fronting towards the sea lay dry and baking in the sun. In the centre stood an old gentleman in plaster-of-Paris, on a wooden pedestal; some Mexican general it was supposed to be, but the rain had washed the name away, so that we were unable to make his further acquaintance. Instead of plants, rows of shells and bottle-ends were drawn about here and there. Flowers were so common everywhere that it would hardly have seemed proper to plant them in the principal square of the town. They were relegated to the back yards. Every house had its enclosure, away from the street, filled with a marvellous wealth of lilies, orchids, bougainvillea, alternating with yellow orange and red-flecked papayas. All this, however, grows of its own

sweet will, without the least complicity on the part of the owner ; it would never occur to a Mexican to care for a plant or protect a fine tree.

At one corner of the plaza was the store. Armed with a letter of introduction, we turned our steps towards the entrance, which was guarded by a couple of sleeping dogs. Señor Coldwell and his partner Bonastre sat on the counter smoking cigarettes ; full-faced, amiable and loquacious gentlemen, having, moreover, some knowledge of English. The former especially was later to prove the one true worthy of the place, and most helpful and useful to ourselves.

The particular business of the moment was to ascertain if we could get a vessel to Tuloom. The *Spellman*, it should be mentioned, was only at our disposal for a limited number of days, and with the sea still rough as it was, it might be some considerable time before we could make a move.

“ Were there any boats we could hire ? ”

Surely, as many as we pleased. This very evening, or to-morrow at latest, the matter should be arranged. Señor Coldwell only regretted he could not offer us his own schooner, the *Iberica*, to take us there, but he was obliged to go over to the mainland himself that afternoon on business. He had friends, however, who would manage everything for us.

*Dios mto*, nothing more simple ! Was there anything further he could do to oblige us ?



Well, yes ; a roof over our heads for a few days. Was there a hotel in the place ?

No, but there was a new house which was in his hands, and empty for the time being. It was ours to do as we pleased with. And now, what did we say to a drink ?

The store, it should be explained, was likewise a saloon and reading-room—being the only place on the island where Spanish newspapers could be found.

Accordingly, the matter was settled over a drink of whisky—without water, as before—among the sacks of meal and packages of sugar that lined the place. Early to-morrow one of the boat-owners of the place would come along to arrange for the voyage. If we did not like his craft, we had only to choose another. There were plenty to be had. Nothing easier. Don Oscar himself would be back again in a week, and would be delighted to run over to Tuloom himself and see how we were getting on. *Salud !*

That same afternoon, then, we moved ashore, sending back the *Sam D. Spellman*, but keeping the cook with us in case of need. Thus we burned our boats behind us, but with a light heart. What matter, seeing there was such an abundance here to choose from ?

The house kindly placed at our disposal was in a side street. It consisted of four pale-blue walls, a bare floor, and a corrugated iron roof.

In the centre was a wooden partition, dividing the place into two rooms. The sole furniture consisted of a row of rough iron hooks in the walls, to sling the hammocks—beds being altogether unknown in this province. The inhabitants not only sleep in hammocks; their birth, marriage and death take place in the same, and the only handicraft in the place which really attains the rank of an art is the netting of these hammocks in various patterns, and of the tiniest mesh. We had, however, a complete tent equipment with us, and were consequently independent.

In the yard behind the house was the kitchen, situated in a hut to itself, built of dry palm leaves and with a flat slab of stone for a stove; the well was dug beneath a lemon tree heavy with yellow fruit.

All this looked well as could be wished. From to-day we might consider ourselves residents of San Miguel, starting housekeeping on our own. All we lacked was a pig and a few fowls. These, however, soon came wandering in from our neighbours, paid their respects and made themselves at home. The girls' school in particular, which was next door, generally furnished a little troop of piglets, which did scavenger work all round to mutual satisfaction. Soon, also, the girls themselves ventured to look in and beg for sweetmeats, and we found an opportunity of practising our Spanish with the lady teachers

over the garden wall. Both Dona Aurora and Dona Julia were somewhat shy and reserved at first, but thawed after a while, when they found that our stores included drinkable tea and English biscuits.

The five hundred inhabitants of the city vouchsafed us during the first few days an attention which was certainly flattering, though somewhat inconvenient. A handful of loafers constantly hanging about, observing how one eats, dresses and sleeps, becomes a nuisance after a while. Soon, however, the public interest in our movements dwindled, to the advantage of both parties, and the idyll was complete. For the rest, the inhabitants were kindly folk, and not without a touch of true Spanish *grandeza* on occasion. In matters of business, however, and agreements, they were hopeless, their motto apparently being to promise anything and fulfil as much as might suit them. They had a way of flourishing about and answering just what they imagined would seem most agreeable to the inquirer, without in the least considering whether it was true; whether the matter were feasible at all or entirely out of the question. It is so easy and pleasant, after all, to spread one's arms wide and with a winning smile declare that it shall be done in a moment. The ultimate result is invariably the same; *mañana*—to-morrow. And to-morrow brings a new *mañana* in an

avalanche of progression ending somewhere in infinity. Heaven knows if they can even manage to die properly when their time comes, or whether here too they put off this last business of life with a shrug of the shoulders and a *mañana* that may prolong their existence a day or so. And as to their daily occupation, this consists of doing nothing. Regular work is as unheard-of a thing as a snowstorm in these regions. Everything is put off, postponed indefinitely. Morning, noon and night make one prolonged siesta, broken, maybe, by a game of billiards or a chat on the steps outside the house at sunset, with a black, straw-scented cigarette as if glued to one corner of the mouth. How they ever care to sleep their eight hours after such a day's work is a marvel. But they ask so little of life, and life itself perhaps would hardly ask much of these remote islanders of the south. The island exists for their sake, not they for the island's. And sufficient unto the day is the siesta thereof. To-morrow's time enough to think of the day after—and after that there is always—*mañana*.

School goes on all the year round. In addition to our neighbours with the little girls and the piglets, there is also a boys' school, which proved to be identical with the ball-room of the *fiesta*. On winter evenings it serves as a theatre. Here and there ragged bits of scenery showed out, and the blackboard just sufficed to hide a sickly

sweet rococo idyll from Versailles, somewhat split at the seams. The class-room walls, by the way, were covered with pictures in fantastic colouring, at a distance resembling a futurist exhibition, but on closer inspection found to represent merely the interior anatomy of a cow, or the back view of a serpent-like crocodile in the act of swallowing a human being. This unpleasant motive occurred in every conceivable variation, doubtless calculated to inculcate a wholesome fear in the youthful mind of over-familiarity with the reptiles in question.

Church there was none. There was a clock-tower, however, but minus the hands of the clock. There were also seven or eight drinking saloons, each with its rickety billiard table. The balls were rather square than round, the cloth for the most part worn away, and the cues warped to an "S" shape, but trifles of this sort did not seem to affect the local players. The game is evidently a national pastime of the Mexicans, in the widest sense of the word, for the marking indicators, hung from long cords by the ceiling, clattered all day long, worked by old and young.

Among the sights of the town there was finally a cinema show, fitted up in a dried fish store. And when, twice a week, the pictures reeled off their shaky second-hand films from the beginning of the century, all the remaining lights of the town went out, the motor being incapable of

providing power for both. Between the acts small boys from the audience would turn somersaults on the stage, and an orchestra consisting of fiddle and drum provided ear-splitting music, all turns being equally appreciated. The ladies wept their due quota of tears and emitted odours of patchouli, the gentlemen clapped their hands or whistled as the occasion demanded. The children of the south are easily moved, whether to laughter or tears, but to the credit of the inhabitants be it said that their feelings only exceptionally found vent in blows.

Our first endeavour, as already mentioned, was to secure a boat. We waited a whole day for the promised appearance of the owner, but when the sun had set and no one had turned up, we knocked at Señor Bonastre's door and ventured to ask why the man had not come.

It then transpired that he had sailed for Campeche that morning, without even having been asked if he would take us across to Tuloom first. There was, however, another very distinguished señor in the town who would be quite un-Christianly delighted, etc., if he could be of service ; he would unfailingly look in upon us to-morrow early, about daybreak.

On the following evening a swarthy individual at last made his appearance, looking for all the world like some pirate out of one of Marryat's stories.

Could he take us across to the mainland ?

Only too pleased. Just give him time to get his cattle out first—they had been penned up for three days without food or water. He would come in to-morrow and fix up definitely for the voyage.

And what would it cost ?

Twenty Mexican dollars<sup>1</sup> out and the same for the return voyage. *Mañana*—in twenty-four hours at latest the vessel should be ready, and, as might well be needed, cleaned for our coming.

Excellent. The pirate was given a shake of the hand and a generous tot of rum—exactly as in the story books.

We looked for him a couple of days. On the third day we encountered him by accident in the street.

“ Well, what about the boat ? ”

The boat was ready, but he had some business to attend to first. Would be back in a fortnight or so, and could then take us along. The cost would be 197 dollars in gold for the single voyage.

Caramba ! He might at any rate have said so at first. Another fortnight to wait—impossible ! And—why on earth 197 dollars ? If he wanted to put up the price some few thousand per cent., he might at least have made it a round sum and said 200 while he was about it.

We told him what we thought of him. And

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<sup>1</sup> One Mexican dollar equals one half-dollar in gold,

from that time forth he disappeared from our horizon.

Next boat !

There were three or four more to choose from. But now it seemed as if the entire shipowning fraternity of Cozumel had entered into a conspiracy against us. Negotiations dragged out unendingly. The price asked grew to fabulous sums, and the *mañana* system scored a complete triumph. It was impossible to come to anything like reasonable dealing in the matter. The days passed, one after another, with anticipations, broken promises and hard words on either side. Soon a week was gone, and we were still not a step nearer our goal. After a little more delay of this sort we began to wonder what it would feel like to spend the rest of our lives on an island in the Caribbean. Having, however, first paid a visit to the burial ground and discovered that pineapples grew on the grave-mounds, we discarded the idea. Better to build a raft and set out on that, chancing what might happen for better or worse.

We had still one hope, however, of getting away in respectable style. Señor Coldwell must soon be back from his cruise. He was the only one who seemed at all trustworthy in matters of business, and we decided for the present to give up all attempts elsewhere. Should this too fail us, then—why, then it would be well to secure our lodgings for the coming year, and make



sure of them by paying down the rent in advance.

These days of waiting, nevertheless, afforded us ample opportunity for a study of our surroundings.

Cozumel is a typical coral island. Along the shore runs a narrow belt of coco-nut palms—the soil would seem to be ideal, for the nuts hung in huge clusters, thick as grapes ; landward of this is dense, almost impenetrable jungle. The constant wind and the thin layer of soil through which the coral shows through in many places prevent the trees from attaining any great height. With rational treatment, however, certain tracts should make excellent pasturage. Cattle breeding and coco-nut planting are also the only useful occupations of the inhabitants, and these are carried on only to a very slight extent. There are ample resources, but energy and initiative are lacking. The sea swarms with fish, but no one knows how to catch them. In the breeding season they are harpooned with implements of the most primitive description ; a bent iron hook with an end of cord attached, the latter being loosely fastened to a sort of throwing spear for use. As might be expected, the results are by no means rich, though the Indians have attained an astonishing skill in hitting a fish the size of a perch at twenty metres distance.

These Indians—the original inhabitants of the

island—rank very low in the scale of civilisation. Raven-black hair, broad faces, flat noses and powerful lower jaw are characteristic features of the race. They walk with a marked forward stoop, due to their peculiar manner of carrying burdens. The load is slung on the back by a thick leather thong, the upper part of which is passed round the forehead, distributing the weight more or less equably between back and head. In this manner they can carry a heavy load any distance, and, in default of cargo proper, they proceed in ballast, so to speak, placing a big stone in the loop as a means of keeping balance and preventing the carrier from falling forward. Such is the force of habit! This method of transport is, however, not peculiar to Cozumel, but is found throughout the whole of Central America. In Guatemala especially we were later to see the most extravagant achievements in this direction.

The Indian's hut is of the simplest description. Not a nail is used, the entire structure being held together by strips of coarse fibre. Upon the scaffolding, or skeleton, a thick layer of dried grass or palm leaves is woven, affording an excellent hiding-place for tarantulas, scorpions and other many-footed insects. The floor is of clay stamped hard, with a fire-place in the centre. Domestic utensils are few and altogether primitive.

From the roof hang maize cobs, dried fish and

tortillas, which, with black beans, form the simple daily food. Baking these tortillas constitutes the principal occupation of the women ; they are made from maize flour and water, and baked on a flat stone. All through Mexico and a great part of Central and South America, these cakes, with *frijoles negros*, are used, answering to the herrings and potatoes of the poorer class at home.

Finally, to complete the furniture, there is a domestic altar. In the darkest corner of the hut stands a roughly-hewn table, upon which round calabash cups are set in a long row. These cups contain offerings of all sorts of fruit and flowers. Above, on the wall, hangs a simple wooden cross, often decorated with coloured rags, that might seem to have been fetched from the nearest dust-heap. Here also the family heir-looms are set up, comprising such things as the lid of an old meat tin, burnt-out electric light bulbs and empty bottles, with perhaps, in cases of rare good fortune, a blatant advertisement for ladies' hats or patent dog biscuits from some back number of an American magazine. Their religion is a mixture of Paganism and modern Catholicism, in which the spirits of air, forest and rain occupy a prominent place.

In relation to their employers, the Indians are almost to be regarded as slaves, and are treated accordingly. For services rendered, they are given assistance in the erection of their huts, and

enabled to provide themselves with the bare necessities of life. The scheme of valuation, however, is such that their work never suffices to pay off the loan, and they are thus in a state of permanent economical dependence upon their creditors until death. In contrast to their masters, the Mexicans, they work decently and well.

It is not altogether clear who was the first white man to have the honour of introducing Cozumel to the rest of the civilised world, and making the acquaintance of the Indians there. According to the legend, a Portuguese vessel came to the island as far back as the close of the fifteenth century, and in 1511 or 1512 a Spanish ship went ashore on the coast of Yucatan. The crew, with the exception of two, were killed by the Indians. There is a reliable record, however, that in 1518, the Spaniard Juan de Grijalva was instructed by his Government to take possession of Yucatan, and that he touched at Cozumel on the way. He is thus the official discoverer of the country. In the following year, the island was visited by Hernando Cortez, and appears on maps of the period.

From this time date the ruins of a great church which Cortez had built immediately to the north of San Miguel. The jungle has dealt hardly with this monument, leaving barely one stone on another. Lianas twine about the remains of the walls, and three stately coco-nut palms stand

where the main altar lights were wont to burn. Four masonry sepulchres above ground bear witness to the perishable nature of humanity ; two of them have been plundered, and through the breaches one can still discern the skulls of some Spaniards who lost their lives in the struggle with the Indians. Who they are that lie there no one knows ; neither the graves nor the skulls bear any inscription.

As late as the middle of last century the custom still obtained in Yucatan of digging up the skulls of the dead and placing them in a corner of the cemetery, inscribing on each the name of the deceased. The usual formula was something like this :

“ *Soy Pedro Moreno* ” (or whatever the name).  
 “ *Un Ave Maria y un Padre Nuestro por Dios, Hermano.* ”

Which, being interpreted, is :

“ I am Pedro Moreno. An Ave and a Pater-noster for God’s sake, brother.”

Cortez’s church is, as far as can be judged, the only relic on the island from the days of the Spanish conquest.

There are, however, several traces of early Maya culture. During one of our many excursions into the interior of the island, we came unawares upon the remains of what must evidently once have been a small city or community. In a newly-cleared space lay a number

of ruins of typical Maya buildings and pointed burial mounds. All were in a sad state of decay. The largest, which the Indians called "the Church," lay apart, on a little elevation, with distinct remains of a surrounding circular wall. Two-thirds of the height of the wall was decorated with a simple frieze. The building was sufficiently preserved to enable one to enter through a narrow aperture. Nothing was to be seen within, however, but bare walls, and hundreds of bats, that flew into the faces of the intruders.

Immediately outside, and surrounded by a low wall, stood a single pillar, irregularly rounded, surmounted by a square-cornered block. This was smooth, and devoid of ornamentation.

In one of the smaller temples the sacrificial altar was still remaining; a low platform of stamped clay or possibly loose mortar against one of the lateral walls, surrounded by flat stones set on edge, and immediately facing the entrance. On the floor lay a large stone, shaped like a key-hole, presumably a piece of ornamental work which had been set up above the door. We dug through and examined the place, unearthing a number of fragments of bone and earthenware.

All the buildings were measured, sketched and photographed. The plans, together with all material of any archæological value, were handed over to the ethnographical department of the Riksmuseum, to be dealt with by experts. We

ourselves, of course, were unfortunately only laymen.

The site where this Maya city lies waiting systematic investigation has no doubt a name, but this must be allowed to remain a secret for the time being. It would be pleasant if some Swedish scientist could find the way thither before anyone else has appropriated it; the Americans in particular are especially inclined to such places. It is by no means easy or agreeable, however, to penetrate to the spot through thickets of bush and masses of tall grasses, for the sacred treasures are guarded by millions of bloodthirsty garrapatas—tiny red flies the size of a pin's head, that attach themselves to the skin all over one's body, causing an intolerable itching, and indeed sometimes fever. The best preventive is tobacco juice from an old pipe, diluted with warm water and rubbed well in. Let anyone try it who cares!

At last, one fine morning, Señor Coldwell appeared on the steps of our house.

"The *Iberica's* in the harbour. I shall be going down to Belize myself in a couple of days, and will take *los señores extranjeros* with me to Tuloom. The vessel must go across to Puerto Morelos first, and fetch some black labourers. But *mañana*, or *pasado mañana*. . . ."

We had thus yet more trying days of waiting. And now we dared not move outside the town,

for fear lest this boat too might manage to come and go off again while we were away, which from what we had learned of the character of Mexican schooners seemed quite possible. Like Napoleon at St. Helena, we gazed incessantly out to sea looking for a sail. We discussed the weather ; the direction and force of the wind furnished a topic of the greatest interest. Generally there was a slight north-east monsoon, with a clear sky. Were we to have another *norte* now ? Or a calm, to keep the *Iberica* from getting back ? Would the current, perhaps, send her on the rocks ?

Time seemed to slacken its pace, and crept along towards the last at a snail's rate. Our patience began to give out, and the most insignificant trifles grew to important events. Now a humming bird, alighting unexpectedly on the dinner-table, would give rise to a storm of excitement ; now a firefly more brilliant than its fellows would bring about an eager discussion as to the chances of the *Iberica's* anchor light. The cook, who had been in the place before, grinned doubtfully and observed, as he prepared a fat turtle for the coming meal :

“ San Miguel very easy place to come to, very hard get away. Schooner fine boat for smuggling, more money that way than take white men on board. People here great rascal. Get all much money from Master. Master stay here long time, better for make money, they say.”



And his simple philosophy certainly seems to have a good deal of truth in it.

At last, however, the hour of deliverance came round. One afternoon the little schooner came flying in, with white spreading sails, like Lohengrin's swan, ready to ferry us to the long-wished-for Montsalvat-Tuloom. We packed up our things in feverish haste; the entire *ménage* was dissolved in a twinkling. And a few hours later we were pacing the deck of the *Iberica*, with firm-set lips declaring no retreat save over our dead bodies.

I shall never forget the night we waved farewell to Cozumel. The wind had dropped, and the sea lay like a sheet of dark onyx, broken only by the almost imperceptible lines of the swell. High in the zenith hung the giant lantern of the full moon, and below, the Southern Cross sparkled like a portent in the sky. The water was so clear, and the light so strong, that, night though it was, one could see right down to the sea floor, a fantastic world of shimmering sand and waving alga, with now and again the glimpse of a moving shadow, as some fish darted over the brighter spots.

The windlass was creaking forward, the blacks chanting a mournful melody as they toiled, glistening with sweat, over the levers. The anchor light still burned at the fore, and in its flickering light the blue shirt of one of the hands showed for a moment like a huge turquoise.

Low-voiced orders in a drawling sing-song Spanish dialect set the blocks creaking and the ropes running through, and soon the sails hung white and slack as the wings of a great stricken bird. Helped by the current, the schooner glided gently farther and farther from the shore, with the smoky little light of San Miguel looking like an unsteady eye. Gradually the sails filled with a gentle breeze. But on the foredeck, a banjo tinkled out the air of a melancholy love-song :

“ ‘ Where is my love to-night ? ’ . . . ”

Sleep was long coming that evening. It was simply too fine to waste, a night on the Caribbean under the full moon.

Towards morning the breeze died away entirely, and the sun rose over a smooth, unruffled mirror of sea.

“ I’ve slept softer in my time,” groaned a voice from the chart-house roof. “ This deck’s what you might call hard.”

“ Oh, you ! You’re soft enough to lie on anything. What about me with only my bones ! ”

“ I swear I’ve got a corn between my shoulder-blades,” went on the first speaker. “ I’ll never do it again as long as I live.”

It proved necessary, however, to do the same again not once but many times, there being no other choice, unless one liked to clamber down into the hold and lie with the ants, that are always found among sugar, or hobnob with

certain other little creatures that are always found among black men. Sleeping under the open sky was preferable, and our friend grew at last so accustomed to lying with a single rug between him and the deck that he declared categorically :

“ On my word, I’ll introduce the fashion when we get home ! ”

The *Iberica* was a smart little schooner of forty tons, with no interior fittings to speak of, all below deck being a single big hold fore and aft, where coco-nuts and other cargo were stowed away, together with any chance passengers there might be. She was practically empty this voyage as regards merchandise, but carried several coloured families going in to Belize to see the dentist. The more gold fillings a nigger has, the finer he esteems himself to be. And their women wear their gold in their teeth instead of in rings and bracelets.

Despite the assurances of our deliverer, Don Oscar, that one could sleep quite comfortably down below on a sticky sugar bag, we nevertheless preferred the roomy deck. Close to the mainmast was a small stove with three wooden walls by way of shelter, and here food was cooked, and tortillas baked all day long. Our black cook declared that food was never so good as when made with salt water. This assertion, however, was met with violent and effective protests.

With a fair wind the trip should not have

taken us more than five hours. But we lay all day tacking about in adverse currents and with little fidgety gusts of wind, so that when the sun neared the horizon once more we were still off the coast some miles north of Tuloom. Then an hour and a half before dark it came on to blow unexpectedly, with a sudden fury. The schooner dashed at a rattling pace down along the desolate coast, and we thought at last we were about to anchor off the ruined city itself. Soon we made out the sharp silhouette of the square tower, that can be seen far out at sea—it could not be more than a couple of minutes off—when the wind died away again, and all we could do was to slip in over the first reef that showed an opening handy, and settle down for the night.

It almost seemed as if the ghosts of Tuloom had entered into an alliance with the *mañana* system, determined to oppose our arrival to the last. With the ruins actually in sight, we were forced to wait a whole night in pouring rain and gusty showers. And then, when we weighed anchor next morning, the *Iberica* ran aground and lost her rudder. The damage, however, was not so serious but that it could be repaired with the material on board, and a few hours later the vessel lay anchored at last immediately south of the citadel, behind a narrow bank of coral that afforded some little protection from the sea. Some low huts and a tent were discernible on the

shore—who could this be that had got here before us?

Despite the fine weather, it was no easy matter to make our way in to land. The coast here is shallow only for a short distance out, falling away then steeply to a considerable depth, so that a very slight sea breaks violently on the ledge. And our little dinghy came very near upsetting, with its irreplaceable load of cameras and sketching materials, but we got through eventually, with a thorough drenching. To reach dry land, one had either to wade or be carried by one of the boatmen, for the boat would not go right in.

On the beach stood seven Mexican soldiers, with their leader, drawn up as if on parade and waiting to receive us. Disreputable ruffians they looked, with bare feet, and ragged shirts fluttering about their bodies. Each carried on his shoulder an ancient and rusty musketoon from 1850. Some time back the Government sent a contingent of fifty men to the district, to keep an eye on the Indians there. These seven were all that remained, the others having deserted after being left for two months without pay. The tent a little way off belonged to the party; the huts, on the other hand, were inhabited by Indians.

Yucatan is a free and independent province, nominally, though hardly in reality, under Mexican rule, and the Indians of Yucatan are a stiff-necked people, acknowledging no law beyond their own.

It was therefore with somewhat mixed feelings that we advanced to meet the representatives of Carranza's proud army. On the one hand, we had no wish to fall into disfavour with the Government, but, on the other, it was even more important to keep on good terms with the Indians. That the two parties were at daggers drawn was a well-known fact. We could, however, trust the Mexicans not to shoot us at sight, which was by no means the case as regards the natives; only a short while before some white men had been attacked and barely managed to escape with their lives.

The Indians, however, remaining in concealment, we could not refuse the proffered escort to the ruins, and walked off accordingly, accompanied by the leader and two of his band.

Hardly had we passed the huge wall which encircles the city on three sides, when a handful of Indians appeared. Thrusting the leader aside without ceremony, they proceeded to scrutinise the intruders at close quarters. We did the like. With hands on our revolver holsters we exchanged long and eloquent glances, but the examination on their part appeared to turn out satisfactorily, and the menacing situation gave way to one of amity.

"*Inglese*," we said, pointing to ourselves. Some weeks before, it should be explained, a deputation had been sent to Belize, begging, on

behalf of the tribe, English protection against the constant harassing of the Mexicans; the name, therefore, was at a premium just then. It was also the only Spanish word likely to be found in their vocabulary. "*Sueco*" would have conveyed no meaning whatever.

By means of signs and gestures we managed to make them understand that our visit was made with no hostile intent, but merely for the purpose of viewing the sacred ruins. Soon we were shaking hands, and cigarettes were brought out. When, further, the chief had been presented with a Swedish matchbox adorned with a figure in glaring colours, the completest understanding was established; the Mexicans, however, were ignored altogether. Even now, the Indians never for a moment let us out of their sight, but followed us in couples on our wanderings among the ruins; they would have no carrying away of specimens, or digging about, for fear lest the spirits should be angered, and great calamities be visited upon the tribe. We were allowed, however, to measure, sketch, make notes, and photograph as much as we pleased. Indeed, they seemed quite eager after a while to show us round, and when we were not quick enough in apprehending the meaning of their signs, they would emphasise them by a friendly dig in the ribs with their guns.

Feeling naturally interested to learn whether the weapons were loaded, and how far the bearers

understood their use, we pointed to a large iguana up in a tree close by. These reptiles are good eating, so it was a tempting shot. One of the men placed himself in position against a tree-trunk, took a long and careful aim, and—bang! There lay the beast dead on the ground. Good. We knew now what we had to reckon with. Plainly, there was both powder and lead in the guns, and some degree of skill behind them.

Besides their firearms, each man carried a whole little arsenal of knives in his belt, besides the inevitable machete—a long, broad-bladed implement with a short handle, used everywhere in these regions both as a weapon and a tool, especially for cutting a way through the dense bushy jungle. Their costume consisted of thin linen trousers, rolled up to the knee, and a ragged shirt. Their bodies were generally well-developed, but the faces bore a pained, degenerate expression, speaking eloquently of inbreeding and ill-health. Their complexion was a dusky brown, with a thin, stiff growth of beard on the chin. The chief and those nearest him wore gold ornaments in their ears, but only on the left side. No other ornaments were worn.

The tribe, which numbers now but a few thousand souls, is a direct offshoot of the Mayas. It dwindles from year to year, and it can hardly be long now before it has died out altogether.

Together with Uxmal, Chichen, Mayapan,





INDIANS FROM TULOOM.



INDIAN WITH LOAD AND HEAD-STRAP.

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Bolonchen, Nohpat, etc., Tuloom forms one of the proudest monuments of Maya civilisation in Yucatan. Its situation alone, on a sheer cliff facing the sea, with the eternal music of the waters below, is in itself impressive. From the top of the massive citadel that stands like a solid block, there is a wide view out over the adjacent coast and the sea; on a clear day one can see the low island contour of Cozumel against the horizon. When Grijalva, in 1518, after his visit to the island, passed on his way westward, he came by this place, as appears from the description written down by his spiritual shepherd on the occasion, and still preserved.

"We sailed," says this writer, "day and night, and on the following day at sunset perceived a castle or city so great that Seville itself seemed neither greater nor finer. We saw there a very high tower. On the shore stood a group of Indians with two flags, which they lowered and raised again and again as a sign to us to come to them. On the same day we came to a creek where was another tower, the highest we had seen. We perceived a quite considerable city; the land was watered by many rivers. We discovered a bay in which a whole fleet might have anchored."

This description, as Stephens in his account of a Journey to Yucatan has already pointed out, agrees with Tuloom. With an unfavourable wind,

the voyage from Cozumel might well take twenty-four hours, and the large bay referred to must be Ascension Bay, there being no others of any considerable size along the coast. The city and the high tower must have been the citadel and the buildings behind it. For it must be borne in mind that at that time the whole site would have been cleared of intervening trees, and thus easily visible from the sea.

Tuloom is further remarkable—if not unique—on account of the mighty wall enclosing three sides of the city. It extends from the shore on one side to the shore on the other, with two watch towers at the two right angles, and is built of great flat slabs of stone, placed loosely one upon another without mortar between. The height varies from two to three metres, the thickness from three to five. The two short arms of the rectangle are about 200 metres long, the long side 450. The former have two, the latter a single covered passage-way, all more or less fallen into decay. It seems likely that there were guard-houses here, but only at one of the gates on the north side are any ruins of such still discernible.

Within this strongly-fortified enclosure lie the buildings, situated quite centrally at the foot of the Gran Castillo. It is difficult to determine their age, but the city would seem to have been built about the VI or VII period, and thus of

more recent date than other finds on the island. It is also likely that it was much later surrendered, for Grijalva sailed back the same way without landing, and the Spaniards afterwards paid but little attention to the peninsula, directing their expeditions chiefly to the north and west coast, where it was easier to land, and where, also, the province was more densely populated. That the inhabitants themselves selected this site for their settlement was due to internal feuds between the various tribes. No trace of any roads leading into the interior has been discovered, but this does not preclude the possibility of such being ultimately brought to light in the gloom of the virgin forest that lies behind. For the Mayas were never a seafaring people, albeit they did use their great war canoes for short trips or surprise raids down the coast.

A detailed description of the various temples, castles, oratories and other buildings would be out of place in the present work. They lie there, set in groves of feathery palms, wrapped in the close embrace of strong lianas, waiting still for the discerning eye of the scientific explorer. Rich treasures of knowledge lie hidden within their walls, undeciphered inscriptions speak from their frescoes, hidden objects in the earth have yet to be brought to light. But it seems as if the gods held a protecting hand over Tuloom, as if the spirits hovered still about the temples,

whispering their *noli me tangere*! For it is a fact that almost every attempt hitherto made to investigate the place more closely has failed. How long will the palms continue to wave over the silent secrets of the dead city?

In the following pages only a very brief survey of the more remarkable buildings will be given, without claim to further value than such as the reader may find therein. Those wishing for more detailed information are referred to the photographs and sketches deposited in the museum.

The castillo, towering in its mighty bulk high above the surrounding undergrowth, must, to a certain extent, be regarded as the central edifice. It is in any case the one that dominates the place and gives its character to the whole. Solidly built, almost as if growing out of the rock itself, it rises, grey and threatening, towards the clouds. Viewed from the sea, the middle part resembles a mighty cube, set on a high stone pedestal of greater breadth, with two wing-like projections at the sides. The side fronting the sea is altogether devoid of ornament, being flat, without entrance or windows, save for some very small loopholes admitting a trifle of air and light. This was presumably with a view to protection from storm and rain, which come down at their worst, as a rule, from the east and north. The fore side of the building, facing landward, is

scantily decorated with friezes and simple ornamentation. The entrance is supported by two thick pillars, above which three metre-high niches appear in the masonry, with the remains of figures still standing. The middle one is comparatively well preserved, and represents a grotesque human being standing on its head, with the legs spreading out to either side. Inside are two longish apartments like corridors, side by side, with the pointed triangular roof typical of Maya architecture. The foremost, and larger of the two, has massive stone benches at each end; the one behind, which is reached by a narrow doorway, has a similar bench running all along one side. This chamber is lighted only through the above-mentioned small loopholes. There is no decoration. The walls are enormously thick, and the floor is covered with stone slabs, above which lies a thick layer of fallen mortar and débris. On the broad, flat roof, grass and cactus grow in abundance.

The wings are smaller, but of similar construction, and partly destroyed. They stand each on its own terrace-like foundation, and each contains a single chamber, but they are for the rest so overgrown and fallen in that it is difficult to reconstruct the original appearance precisely. The entire block, including the wings, is about thirty metres long.

From the centre of the citadel a steep stone

stairway of twenty-four steps, ten metres wide, leads down to the ground below. Along the edges run the remains of a simple balustrade, built of flat stone slabs. Finally, on either side of this are two smaller stairways to the terraces of the wings.

At the foot of the south stairway lies a small, well-preserved adoratorio, a simple stone building, containing a single square chamber with altar. Charcoal and ash were found on the burned stones, which appeared to have been recently used. This seems to suggest that the Indians even to this day frequent the place for the purpose of mystical offerings to the spirits of their forefathers; no white man, however, has yet been in a position to observe such rites.

In continuation of the great stairway lie the remains of smaller houses, and just beyond these, in the densest of the jungle, stands the most remarkable temple in the place. It consists of a rectangular building in two stories, the lower measuring about eighty-six metres outside the walls, and the upper somewhat less. The front especially, which faces west, has been richly ornamented with stucco work, parts of which were probably at one time painted. A broad frieze runs along the whole side immediately below the roof, with serpent, plume and leaf designs. Through the entrance, which is divided by four massive pillars with squared capitals,



one passes into a long, narrow passage, running on three sides of a small central chamber, the holy of holies. This is almost entirely dark, save for the scanty, indirect light admitted through a narrow doorway to the corridor without. Against the wall on the long side, facing the entrance, stands a rectangular stone altar.

In several places the mark of the "red hand" was visible. It looks as if some one had dipped their hand in blood, and then with splayed fingers dabbed an impression on the wall. There is some difference of opinion as to the significance of this, but it is generally regarded as a symbol of the owner's unrestricted right over the place in question. Some of the marks appeared quite fresh.

The interior of the temple has been decorated with artistically-executed frescoes, some of them in high relief. The ground colour was red, reddish brown, blue or green, with the outlines and ornaments in black. Only traces of it now remain, the most and best having been obliterated by damp and disintegration. Some few small spaces are still so far preserved that the figures are indistinctly discernible through a thick layer of mildew. In one corner we could with difficulty make out the figure of an Indian chief, with a huge, highly-conventionalised feather robe from the head down the back. The green has lasted best as a rule, and next to that the black, which was used for friezes and purely decorative designs.

The upper story was less decorated. A few simple stucco ridges run round the outside, with an ornamental central figure above the entrance. The single square chamber is empty and cold. The stairway, built outside, had fallen in, so that we had to climb up by the lianas to get in.

Quite close to this temple are two others. The nearer stands on a broad, low terrace, and is larger in extent than the one just described. Only a portion of the walls, however, is still preserved; the roof has fallen in long since. Above the entrance, which is supported by two pillars, still lie the ancient wooden beams, and above these is a huge idol's head in stucco, surrounded by a frame of plumes like a sun.

The third temple is merely a heap of ruins.

On an artificial mound N.N.W. of the citadel stands a well-preserved building of small size. Narrow, steep stairs lead to the top. On the walls of the little temple dilapidated frescoes speak of former glory, and above the doorway sits the same fantastic figure as in the great citadel itself. Inside is a fallen altar; along the edge of the roof the remains of a simple frieze in fresco.

Immediately adjacent to the gateway of the surrounding wall on the north are the ruins of what would appear to have been a guard-house, and close by is a small grotto with water. According to the Indians it is drinkable, but



A MINOR TEMPLE.

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slightly salt. There being no other spring within the area, this must be supposed to have been the city well. Finally, about 100 metres towards the sea is a smaller citadel on a projecting rock, from which an excellent view is obtained of the grey mass of the main building.

There are a number of other ruins inside the wall, but none so well preserved or of such interest as those already described. Outside also, chiefly in a northerly direction, one comes upon buildings in the woods. It is likely, therefore, that the city itself was of considerable extent, the wall environing only the central portion, with its treasures and sacred edifices. In the event of hostile attack, the area enclosed would doubtless be large enough for the entire population to take refuge there.

A whole book might be written about this one site, so full of memories, so rich in unsolved mysteries, so impregnated with the spirit of the past. The story of a people at the height of their power and civilisation when the first of the Spanish caravels mirrored its sails in the water before the Castillo of Tuloom, of an origin rooted far back in the depths of pagan times, of sudden downfall and destruction. Of races that lived and worked and died thousands of years before Europe ever dreamed of their existence, of mighty chieftains and wise men, themselves the idols of their tribe, the terror of their

enemies, and the admiration of their friends. Of hatred and vengeance, conquest and defeat, strenuous toil and tyrannical luxury. But their day is past, and only crumbling ruins now remain to speak in their powerful tongue of what once was. The peacock screams from the heights, and the iguana steals after its prey through the darkened chambers. And the wind sings through the delicate tracery of the palms; vanity of vanities.

What has been said, then, must suffice. The dead city of Tuloom lies like a milestone on the road of human progress. But happy the people that could leave such a monument to posterity.

Once more the *Iberica* spread her white wings for flight; but this time it was with furious speed and foam about the bows. A fresh northeasterly breeze was blowing, and the waste coast of Yucatan sped past in one long monotonous panorama.

It seemed as if the spell were broken now we had once left Tuloom, as if its spirits had relinquished their purpose in face of our obstinacy and determination to proceed. And since we had entered within their walls they found, perhaps, no further grounds for ill-will. For the wind suddenly favoured us, the sun shone warmly and kindly, fish snapped at the lines which hung straining taut over the stern, and all on board

were in the best of spirits. If the voyage north had been troublesome, the homeward journey proved the easier now, and indeed it was time enough, for after the long delay at San Miguel we were in a hurry to get on.

Nevertheless, we could not deny ourselves the pleasure of putting in one afternoon at one of Don Oscar's plantations situated right on the coast, and, since the owner himself was with us, it was not long before a banquet in country style was spread in the little *hacienda*. Fish, turtle, eggs, *frijoles negros* and hot, newly-baked *tortillas*—what more could one desire?

The *arrendatario*<sup>ario</sup>, a swarthy little Mexican, waited on us himself. He was everywhere at once, and smartness itself. There being no corkscrew in the house, he drew the capsules of the beer bottles with his teeth, or simply bit the neck off if no other means would serve. The pickle jar was tall and narrow-necked; forks were unknown, but our friend contrived without winking a long prodding implement like a large toothpick with a rusty old fish-hook, settling the matter to the satisfaction of all concerned. If a fly or a grasshopper settled on the food, he was there in a moment to pick it out with his fingers. Certainly the most helpful personage one could wish to meet.

And his care for the plantation, too! Twenty-five thousand newly planted trees called for the

services of ten labourers. These last were paid as follows : free quarters, which each was allowed to build according to his own fancy ; gratis food, which each was permitted to procure for himself (the nearest settlement being about sixty miles away) ; and a daily wage of three *pesos* and three tots of spirit. Furthermore, each could, on payment, obtain such further drinks as he might wish for—at twenty cents a time. And the heat being considerable, and thirst in proportion, the major part of the daily wage was generally returned in exchange for spirits. Altogether, then, the upkeep of the place cost practically nothing. The undertaking should have a great future before it, and prove remunerative beyond all bounds. A handy sort of man was that *arrendatario*.

Another day's sail brought us back to Belize. Here the *Iberica* was to be overhauled, and have a new motor installed, while Señor Coldwell's youngest hopeful, Oscarito, went to school for a little polish.

Then, by the kind permission of the health authorities—who nevertheless looked askance at first and seemed inclined to pick us up with a pair of tongs, seeing we came from a region where the yellow fever was still reported flourishing—we were allowed to go ashore, albeit with strict injunctions to pay a daily visit to Dr. Cran for the first week. We had visited him, anyhow, for he was an amiable person, who always offered visitors a drink however early they might call.



## SOUTHWARD TO QUIRIGUA

THE first question we asked on our return was :  
" Has Professor Hartman come ? "

We had arranged to meet in Belize at the beginning of March, and the calendar already showed the 6th. Delighted with our find at Cozumel, and full of respect for the venerable relics at Tuloom, we were anxious to communicate our observations without delay, and set the good professor on the trail.

We made a raid on the hotels of the place at once, but, to our great disappointment, without result. The Customs and passport authorities likewise could tell us nothing. Belize is not one of those great cities in which a man can easily disappear and leave no trace, consequently we were forced to the conclusion that our friend had in some way or other been delayed. No letter, no message. We hoped on, however, to the last. It was not till considerably later that we learned how unforeseen circumstances prevented him altogether from making the trip.

The question now was which of the numerous sites where ruins or other monuments were said to be found should be investigated. We reckoned

to be in the capital of Guatemala in three weeks' time, and the period thus at our disposal was a determining factor in deciding where to go meantime.

There was an abundance of places to select from. Almost every day we received information of buried cities in the jungle, all within the boundaries of the colony. But the Indians are a highly imaginative race, and we often found, on later cross-examination, that the city in question consisted at the best of a crumbling burial mound with neither buildings nor anything else beyond. The temple of Sta. Rita had not long before been investigated by Dr. Gann, an English medical man interested in local antiquities—as also the western district round Cayo and Benque Viejo on the way to Peten. On the south, however, on the other side of the little-known Cockscomb Mountains, was virgin land which was said to contain much that was of value. This region was also more or less on our way, and we should at the same time have an opportunity of visiting the small coast settlements of the colony, possibly also running across to some of the many small islands outside, which, according to report, were rich in the material we sought.

There was one spot in particular, situated in the Toledo district, close to the little town of San Antonio, which attracted us. Reports from different sources agreed in the statement that a

great city was to be found in the adjacent forest, with well-preserved buildings, carved monoliths and other fantastic monuments, which, of course, increased in proportion to the distance the news had to travel. No white man had ever been there, and but few Indians knew the way thither. From Punta Gorda on the coast we could ride up to San Antonio, engage guides there, and then with our impedimenta on our backs, proceed through the jungle to the goal. How far it was no one could say; the natives have no idea at all of time or distance. Some said a day's march, others a week's. The truth was probably somewhere between the two.

The first thing to be done was to set about finding a suitable craft to take us down the coast. The *Iberica* was resting for repairs. But a coloured trader in the town was part owner of another schooner, which happened to be empty at the moment, and could be chartered for a reasonable sum. Accordingly one of the party observed—

“We shall be ready to sail in four days from now. So if we order the boat for to-morrow, we may get away in a week's time. Schooners are queer cattle to deal with in these parts.”

In this, however, we were wrong. For the *mañana* system ends at the Mexican frontier, and we were now in a well-conducted British colony. The very next day the vessel was ready,

and we had to make haste and pack our things. After a hurried farewell to many newly-found friends in Belize, we set off on our travels once more.

The *Albert F.*, which was the name of our new schooner, was a fifty-ton craft, with two motors on board to serve in default of favourable wind. She was a roomier vessel than the *Iberica*, with a good-sized cabin aft, and more deck-space to move about in. And the commencement of the voyage proved also quite a pleasure trip.

The whole coast of British Honduras is protected from the sea by a row of coral islands, in places so close together as to form a perfect maze of skerries. Inside these, however, and running through them to the open sea, are well-marked fairways, so that one can sail in smooth water all the way to Punta Gorda. However hard it may blow, there is never any sea here, the waves being broken by the reefs a couple of miles out.

Our immediate objective was Stann Creek, a little place of 2,500 inhabitants, with a real pier, the starting point—or terminus, as you please—of the only railway in the colony. All is Government property, but up to now the undertaking has proved a poor investment, expenses regularly amounting to 50 per cent. above the revenues produced.

The railway is typical of the tropics. A narrow-gauge line, with the rails all askew, over which a

little toy train jolts along with a rattle of couplings and a screaming of ungreased wheels. The miniature engine, small enough to put in a drawing-room, coughs like a consumptive, and seems fainting under the bulk of its huge funnel cap, which nevertheless does not prevent it from sending out a perfect plume of sparks. The rolling stock consists of goods waggons only. For the convenience of occasional passengers, a few benches are stuck in here and there. Weeds grow rank over the permanent way, the trains running so infrequently that there is plenty of time for them to pick up in between. Pigs and cattle shift lazily aside out of the way, and the ancient yarn of the train that managed to overtake a cow grazing along the line and had to stop is often actually realised here. And the end of the line is simply and solely an end, the rails ceasing suddenly and blankly at a hill or in the middle of a plain. The money would go no further, so the line had to stop.

Forty kilometres a man may travel this wise in British Honduras, and no more. But the journey is worth while. The landscape is rich with luxuriant vegetation, the hills rise in gradual waves from the coast, the valleys echo with the busy splash of streams. Huts show up here and there, picturesquely set about the scene, and all around are huge banana plantations or fruitful orchards, heavy with yellow lemons or grape-

fruit the size of a football. The cohune palm raises its graceful leaves toward the sky, the nuts hung amid the foliage like over-heavy clusters on a vine. In the forests mahogany and cedar grow abundantly, with the pliable balza, a wood lighter than cork and costlier than ebony. And in the shade glow the magnificent orchids, soft in colour and full of delicious perfume. A wonderfully rich and beautiful country this, which great Albion in days past annexed almost casually, as it were. And even now but few Englishmen are aware that such a jewel exists in the crown of their great colonial power.

Stann Creek itself calls for little remark. The Europeans were kindly and hospitable as ever, the negroes, if possible, even blacker than in the capital, and the native urchins as naked and impertinent as elsewhere in the tropics. Add the fact that the sea here is specially famous for its voracious sharks—which is saying a great deal for these regions—and that the natives' canoes are sometimes attacked and upset by the persistent brutes, and little more need be said.

After a stay of one day in the place, we set off again to the southward.

The low-lying coast now gradually rises, the hills extending down nearer to the water. The lofty Cockscomb Mountains hid their peaks for the most part among the clouds, but of an evening the rugged silhouettes would sometimes stand out

suddenly, glowing a coppery red in the sunset for a while, then putting on their nightcaps again. We put in at several places along the coast, but it was not till just outside Punta Negra that our explorations met with any result.

In among a labyrinth of little islands overgrown with mangroves—cays is the local term—lies Wild Cane Cay. It is distinguishable from the surrounding islets by its coco-nut palms, which stand up in bunches from the mangroves below, as the only trees of any value in this little archipelago. We knew there should be burial grounds here dating from the earliest times. And soon the *Albert F.* lay at anchor in a sheltered harbour amid a confusion of low reefs.

The anchorage here was so well concealed that one might easily pass by outside without the slightest idea that a vessel lay there at all. It is said that at the outbreak of the recent war an English steamer was in these waters on her way home. The captain, anxious at the news, turned back, and with the help of some fishermen got his vessel into the harbour. There was plenty of paint on board, and here they stayed until the vessel had changed her colour from yellow to black. The authorities, knowing the vessel should be somewhere in the neighbourhood, searched for it in vain, and finally informed the owners that it was probably captured or sunk. A fortnight later, however, a newly painted, sooty black

shadow stole across the Atlantic, and on her safe arrival the company at first was hardly inclined to recognise the new boat.

It is hard to understand why this low-lying island in particular—hardly five acres in extent—should have been chosen from among so many others for a burial ground. Possibly the land was higher then than it is now. Possibly some special legend or superstition attached to the place, or perhaps the sheltered harbour proved the attraction, as affording a place where the bloody rites of the funeral ceremony could be performed unseen by curious eyes. One thing at least is certain; for remoteness and idyllic peace it would be hard to find a better cemetery.

There are a few unassuming burial mounds on shore, most of which have already been excavated by Dr. Gann, but without producing any finds of particular value. The whole ground, however, is covered with a thick layer of charred earth, where one is constantly treading on potsherds, flakes of obsidian and the remains of bones, all mixed up and crushed to little pieces, as if it had passed through a machine. Delicate shells and smooth flints set like flowers in the mass further add to its remarkable appearance. On digging down with the machete, the result is the same; only rarely is any whole implement or unbroken piece of pottery unearthed. We brought away with us what we did find of value, and also bought up



the little that had been found of recent years by the owner.

Francisco Cabral was a half-black Spaniard with snow-white hair and a fluent tongue. He bore his seventy-six years as if they had been half the number. Twenty years before he had bought the whole archipelago for a thimbleful of gold-dust, and since then he had never left the spot. Two coco-nut palms and a primitive fishery were, to begin with, his only means of subsistence, his life that of a Robinson Crusoe. Now, the trees grow thickly, and the fish are taken in machine-made nets from New York. Pigs and fowls grub about among the potsherds and a comfortable, homely little bungalow peeps out from among the trees. Slender canoes, beautifully polished, lie moored at the landing stage. But the island is still a little world of its own, where the old man holds undisputed sway over a numerous progeny of two generations. Ask him if he does not now and then find the life wearisome, if he would not like to sell the whole concern and go and live among his fellow-men once more—and a tear will glisten in his eye as he answers :

“Not for gold enough to cover the island ! I’ve lived here the best of my days, and here I hope to end them. My grave’s to be out on the point there. And the roots of the palms may draw nourishment from my mouldering remains, to the good of coming generations. The world

is for others. Wild Cane Cay for old Francisco and his children."

And surely he was right.

As one looked at the old patriarch in the circle of his sons, pointing proudly with one hand to the task of his life accomplished, it was easy to understand that such a man transplanted to another soil must wither and die. His heart was for ever one with his island.

When we weighed anchor that evening he was still there on the quay, waving farewell, his hair gleaming like a halo round his head, his huge figure showing gigantic against the dark-green water of the creek. And by his side stood a lad blowing melancholy tones from the curving trumpet of a purple shell.

The rain was pouring down when we sighted the little settlement of Punta Gorda on the following day; on this part of the coast the dry period is not of the same duration as farther north. It was a raw, chilly day, and the wind made our wet clothes doubly cold to the body, while below decks the moisture was so intense that a match merely fizzed on the side of the box when one attempted to strike a light.

None the less, the sight of the town was welcome enough, for there was a doctor there, and in our cabin on board lay a sick man, already delirious, and talking nonsense about horses and the art of acquiring a decent seat. For some time past,

Sandeberg had been looking queer about the eyes, and two nights back the fever had broken out in earnest. With the aid of a "Handbook of Tropical Diseases," we had tended him as well as we could, diagnosing his case alternately as typhus, malaria, cholera and yellow fever, but saturating him with quinine from the start to be on the safe side. The doctor came aboard, and two minutes after we learned that he was suffering from malignant malaria, that he was ill—which we already knew—and should be removed at once to hospital on shore. There was, it is true, a little bungalow in the place which was used as a hospital in case of need, but there was a larger and better one at Quirigua, which was strongly recommended. It was only six hours by sea to Puerto Barrios, and another three hours from there by rail. If we started at once, we could be there the following morning.

This was a check we had not bargained for. Just as we reached the starting point of the expedition inland, we had to set off again with a very doubtful future before us. At the best, two of us might return. But our cartographer, at any rate, was lost to us for some time to come.

A hasty visit to the town was sufficient to reveal its utter insignificance, and the altogether uninviting character of the hospital bungalow. The inhabitants, numbering hardly eight hundred in all, are for the most part Caribs, black as Jim

Crow, with close, woolly hair and prominent lower jaw. They have long been regarded as the most skilful fishermen and the best sailors of the West Indies. In their long, narrow canoes they will defy almost any gale. Indisposed to any other manual labour, they devote themselves chiefly to smuggling, which has for many years been held the only regular occupation fitted for a Carib with any self-respect.

There were, however, various preparations to be made in case of a possible expedition inland. Were there bearers to be had, or guides, or mules? It was easy enough to get to San Antonio, but what then?

Our inquiries were met by a shake of the head; the idea was ludicrous. No one had ever heard of any ruined city; but they would do what they could, all the same, if we really wished it. One thing, however, they would point out; the roads inland were sodden with rain, and in places impassable. Still, if we did not mind that . . . well and good. We should be welcome.

This seemed far from promising, but the thought of that ruined city in the forest was too attractive to be lightly given up.

"We shall be back here in a week. Can you have everything ready by then?"

"Certainly. But remember the story of the hat."

Hat? What hat? What did the fellow mean?

We were in a hurry, however, and had no time for long discussions. Half an hour later the schooner was heading for Puerto Barrios, the port of entry to Guatemala from the east.

The sun shone out anew, but it was still strangely cold. I moved out of the shade, but only felt colder. And at the same time, my pulse began to get jerky, increasing its pace from a trot to a gallop. My brain seemed doubly active, while the body appeared to be slipping away into a trance. Was I coming down with fever, too? Little doubt about it. The malaria had found its way into my blood, and was starting its furious race.

Well, well, a little quinine would settle it in a day or so. But with every hour that passed I felt less and less inclined for that ride up inland over roads of bottomless mud. The hat; the story of the hat. . . . ?

And suddenly I realised what the man had meant. There is a hoary anecdote current in these parts which serves better than many words to describe the difficulty of travel by land during the rainy season.

A man came riding along a path. The middle was still passably firm, but the sides a mere sloppy mess of mud. All at once he espies a hat at the edge of the way. He stops, leans down, and picks it up. To his astonishment, a face looks up from beneath the wide brim, and nods at him in recognition.

"Hullo! That you?"

"Good Heavens—Don Pedro! What on earth are you doing down there? You must be nearly dead!"

"Oh, I'm getting along quite nicely, thanks. But it's a bit hard on the poor beast I'm riding!"

What would it be like, then, with fever in one's veins? At the moment San Antonio seemed unutterably remote. A bubbling sea of mud barred the way, a sea full of germs; malaria germs as big as whales; millions of them at play. . . .

The mountains of Guatemala and Spanish Honduras showed blue in the distance, with the Golfo de Amatique glittering in the sun at their foot. The white houses of Puerto Barrios grew ever larger, the long pier where the United Fruit boats berth, ever higher and broader. And at last the *Albert F.* lay in harbour, with customs officers on board declaring with much ceremony that we were at liberty to land.

This was easier said than done, with one's head whirling like a roundabout, and one's legs apparently transformed to gutta-percha. However, we had to manage it somehow.

The town, the houses, the people—all whirled past as in a fog. The port authorities seemed to be standing on their heads, the passport officers were turning cartwheels; the Fruit

Company's men exhibiting somersaults. Some one was saying something about some train that went from somewhere some time in the morning, with some one's goods and room for some one or other. But it all seemed tangled up and meaningless.

Then a big white house came dancing straight towards us, and then a flight of steps, that seemed to reach up to the clouds. Then up on top something that looked like a bed . . . and in a little while nothing but a row of hats on a wall, with grinning heads under, and great big germs playing leap-frog all round.

Next morning everything was in the same topsy-turvy state. Three hours in a train, burning hot—it might have been three days. The coach stood still, jolting on one spot, but the landscape rushed past at desperate speed. Whichever way one looked, was a mist of bananas ; on the ground, on the trees, in the air, on the seat, and in one's head. Then suddenly the ground stopped moving. A voice from somewhere in the vague distance was asking how I felt. Red and green fireworks came next. Then another house stepped forward and stood tottering unsteadily, a white mattress laughed uproariously, an iceberg appeared, took a leap and landed with both feet on some one's head . . . and then nothing at all for a long, long time. . . .

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For nearly three weeks Sandeberg and the writer lay in hospital.

Farewell to the ruined city beyond San Antonio, and the beautiful Rio Dulce, esteemed the pearl of Guatemala. Farewell to the ruins of Copan on the frontier of Spanish Honduras, which Maudslay has declared to be the finest in the world! All our plans were brought to a standstill for some time to come, for the rule to be observed after a stay in hospital was mercilessly strict; no exertion of any sort for the first month, no exposure to sun or rain. There was no getting round this. A stern, but necessary sentence, with no appeal.

And when the two members of the party who were still fit started out on this or that excursion, it was bitter to have to stay behind on the veranda, even though one knew that one's strength would have given out almost at the door. The failure of their expedition to Copan, which had to be given up half-way owing to difficulties in crossing the frontier of Honduras, etc., afforded at best a twinkle of malicious humour; but there was little real satisfaction in that. The fact remained that we two were out of action for the time. Fortunately, however, the revolution in the capital a month later upset our rules and regulations altogether. A drastic method of cure, no doubt, but effective. It was simply no good being ill under the circumstances, and



after a time life got round to its old fashion once more.

For a man with little superfluous flesh, malaria is a particularly uncomfortable complaint. The patient gets practically nothing to eat at all. A glass of milk every three hours, or a plate of thin soup, is hardly calculated to make one fat and content. Moreover, the sense of taste entirely disappears, so that an egg and an orange are synonymous to the palate. The constant fever temperature is wearying and weakening to a degree; and when at last it is over, one feels like a limp-wrung dish-cloth.

And then the quinine. Large doses morning, noon and night, until the bitter taste at last becomes almost unendurable, and one would do anything to get away from it. Only the knowledge that the powder is the sole cure makes it possible to take it at all. It goes to one's head, too, especially at first, producing a sort of intoxication. The sense of hearing becomes blunted, and one's head seems like an inflated football. with myriads of little bells ringing, interleaved with the crashing of some distant Niagara. Life all around grows meaningless and unreal; everything seems to pass by like a shadow-play, and one feels oneself left out, forgotten, thrust aside. One may try to call out, but in vain; try to listen, but hearing only the wearied beating of one's own heart. Then, one morning the

temperature has gone down, the doses are reduced, the patient comes back to reality, thinks it is over, makes a shaky attempt to stand on his legs, and presto! up goes the line on the chart once more, and before nightfall one is lying there as helpless as before. And when the temperature of the place is higher than one's own, it is a trying business altogether at times.

Yet, after all, we were lucky indeed to find ourselves here in Quirigua.

If a man must be ill at all, there is no better place in all Central America he could choose for the purpose.

The hospital belongs to the United Fruit Company. When that concern, some years back, extended its operations to embrace also the eastern lowlands of Guatemala, the place lay in complete decay. The railway ran through dense jungle, where monkeys clambered about and parrots chattered, but the province produced nothing of value at all.

Then the axes got to work. One clearing after another was made, and bananas planted by the thousand, until soon the whole country looked like a single plantation from end to end. Proper dwelling houses were built, hundreds of new wagons were added to the rolling stock to carry the fruit to Barrios, for further transport thence to the States. All these undertakings brought a large staff of labourers, foremen,

engineers and managers to the country. And in order to get reliable men for the various posts, men with families, men of education, men who would be content to live there for years at a stretch, the Company built the great hospital at Quirigua.

For the province was a far from healthy one. But by offering its servants this refuge where they could, in case of need, find rest and proper care, the Company created at once a feeling of security. It was comforting to know that if any member of the family fell sick, one had only to send them to the hospital to get them back to health and strength free of charge ; a good bed, a doctor who stood at the head of his profession, and a kindly nurse who gave the patient the best of her care.

The Company has attained its object. Its subjects are, for the most part, picked men, who gladly remain at their posts for several years without a break.

But nothing is obtained without payment.

The building itself cost a quarter of a million dollars to erect, and requires seventy-five thousand annually for its upkeep. True, the Company's servants contribute two per cent. of their pay towards these expenses, and outsiders are charged a small sum per day, but nevertheless, it costs the concern something like fifty thousand dollars a year.

It is money well spent, however. For, in return, the rest of the undertaking profits by it, and the plantations represent a revenue of millions. So that what is entered in the accounts as loss proves, in reality, a gain.

A few years back, the spot where the hospital now stands was a wilderness. Save for a few huts, where some poor Indians lived out their unnoticed existence, there was not a soul in the place. Nevertheless, the name was fairly well known, for close at hand are the tall Maya monoliths, far-famed monuments about which ever hovers the spirit of an ancient civilisation. The inscriptions, carved in wonderfully beautiful relief, drew a number of explorers to the spot, otherwise it was only exceptionally that any white man found his way thither. There was nothing to attract the visitor; the jungle was full of garrapatas, serpents and other poisonous creatures. And of an evening, milliards of malaria-spreading mosquitoes hummed their piercing song, while the fireflies danced among the leaves.

Now, all is changed. The ancient monoliths are almost forgotten; it is the hospital which has set its mark on the whole place; its work of blessing is in the mouths of all. If a man says he is going up to Quirigua for a week, you may say you are sorry he is ill, but you congratulate him none the less on going to such an

excellent place. In former days, one would have offered to write his epitaph and comfort his sorrowing widow.

The great building is set on a hill, surrounded by velvety lawns and well-tended flower beds. The bougainvillaeas make great splashes of violet ; roses climb over tall espaliers that almost sink under their weight ; the walls are hidden with a confusion of honeysuckle, and the ground is brilliant with the red, white and blue of poppies, lilies, and a thousand other growths for which we have no name. The trees are loaded with lemons, oranges and tangerines. The fruits of the pepper bush glow like drops of blood in the sun ; the orchids send out a perfect stream of perfume from the cool shade. It is a riot of colour all around, almost painful to the eye.

Tame deer graze about the place, and pigeons settle on one's shoulders, asking to be fed. Outside the enclosure the banana plantations commence again, and farther off, the heights and hills show green in the distance. In the evening the sun lights the clouds about their summits till they blaze with gold and copper. One can see far across into Spanish Honduras, where the highlands of Sta. Barbara open out new perspectives, leading away to a misty, endless distance.

The interior of the hospital is fitted up with the last word in modern equipment. Large,

well-lighted operating theatres, huge sterilising ovens, a bacteriological laboratory, X-ray section, electric kitchen—in a word, everything nowadays pertaining to a well-appointed repair shop for damaged humanity.

The various sections are connected here and there by covered passages, and each separate building has a broad, open veranda running all round, guarded from floor to ceiling with close-meshed mosquito netting, so fine that one does not notice its presence at first. Within are the airy wards and separate sick rooms, all in white or tiled in pale yellow. There is space for about two hundred beds. Each separate room has its own bath and toilet arrangements, with hot and cold water; a comfortable chair, a glass-topped table, and a lamp complete the furniture.

The establishment has also its own extensive water supply, electric power station, great refrigerators, and a whole little garden city for the workers and functionaries.

In this little kingdom Dr. MacPhail holds unrestricted sway. He manages all as he pleases; repairs, improvements and additions to the buildings. The Company pays the bills without a murmur. But first and foremost he is a skilful doctor and a lover of his kind. When his clean-shaven face, with the strongly-marked features and the twinkling eyes alight with their ready humour appears in the wards, the patients seem

to feel better at once ; and if he comes round to inspect anywhere, the work goes on with redoubled energy almost of itself. There is hardly a more popular man to be found in the north of Central America. MacPhail treats all alike, manager and errand boy, landed proprietor and poor Indian without distinction.

He has two other doctors under him, six white nurses, and a host of coloured boys that slip in and out of the rooms silently as rats. It is but rarely they understand English. A patient who is not a master of Spanish must therefore expect at first to be given a bunch of bananas instead of the towel or whatever it was he asked for.

One takes things easily in daily life, with no strict rules to be observed. If one feels like it, nothing easier than to slip out and go for a walk in the garden. Or visit one's neighbour, if he is inclined for a chat, in which case the introductory topic is always the same :

"How's your chart getting on? Going up or down?"

"Oh, dancing. How's yours?"

For the fever chart is the one thing nearest the hearts of all.

It might seem, perhaps, that the story has been unreasonably delayed by this description of the hospital. But the place is so unique, as to its origin, character and magnificent scale,

that it cannot be disposed of in a couple of lines.

What the Fruit Company has done in Quirigua for suffering humanity is hardly to be equalled, perhaps, in the tropics. And why, then, should it not be emphasised as is its due ?

When at last we were out of hospital and declared fit—though to be sure our fitness was nothing to speak of at first—we went for a week's rest at the house of Mr. Shaw, the Fruit Company's manager at Virginia. He was a great man, but kindly and sympathetic as well. In his comfortable home and under the care of a most amiable hostess our strength gradually returned.

We made an excursion, of course, to see the monoliths, that stand like two huge giants in a clearing in the jungle, evidences of the culture of a past age. Greyish-brown in colour and covered with hieroglyphics, they raise their mighty mass towards the clouds, somewhat like tall, narrow gravestones to look at. Four out of the five are still upright. In the grass close by, lie two huge blocks of stone, likewise richly sculptured. From a distance they resemble two huge turtles.

Bulky volumes have been written about these monuments. That part of the inscriptions which refers to chronology has been partially interpreted, the only difficulty being to find the starting point





MONOLITH AT QUIRIGUA.

*To face page 144.*



and determine the dates in relation to our own calendar. The remainder of the signs are still a mystery that waits its solution.

Readers interested in the subject may here refer to the works of Maudslay, Joyce and Spinden.

At last we were all assembled at the railway station of Quirigua, after nearly a month of separation. It was a fine, cool day. From the hill, we could see the great hospital building, with its memories of delirium and burning fevered nights. Now, however, all that was part of the past; the mind of man finds it easy to forget—and well that it is so. Ahead of us beckoned the highlands of Guatemala, its picturesque people, its ancient Spanish cities and ruined churches. We drew in our breath, scenting fresh adventures and experiences. It was good to be alive.

All day the train rolled on its way, mostly up steep inclines and round perilous curves. Bridges high in air, spanned ravines and rivers with the stretch of a giant hand, while the locomotive bored its way through the curving tunnels of rock like a gnawing worm. At El Rancho, the real ascent begins, rising to 6,000 feet above sea level; in the brown-scorched valley of Zacapa, all vegetations ceases suddenly, not to return until the journey is nearly at its end. The landscape grows more and more like a desert. A

few dry bushes take the place of the jungle, and prickly cactus serve instead of flowers. These growths, however, have another purpose, serving also as a hedge. On either side of the line, for mile after mile run rows of such plantations. And where the fencing is required to be especially thick, barbed wire is threaded through between the plants, and fragments of glass are stuck into the stems, to make a thorough job of it.

Stations occur at regular intervals ; desolate, sun-scorched, empty of inhabitants. The corrugated iron roofs seem almost redhot in the intense heat. A few barelegged urchins offer fruit and rotten eggs, and in the distance, a group of tumbledown huts may be seen. And that is all.

Then on again, ever upward, passing through even wilder country, until at last the engine ceases its panting. The wagons run easily now, one can feel that the ascent is at an end. The vegetation shows some faint signs of returning ; in the distance one can discern a great town.

It is Guatemala City.

## GUATEMALA

TAKE a piece of stiff brown paper, crumple it well up, smooth out the edges, and then spread a thin touch of green paint in the middle and a little more liberally at the sides—and the contour map is complete. That is roughly what the Republic of Guatemala looks like. The lowland province of Peten juts out, without rhyme or reason apparent, far into Mexico, the east and west coasts have more or less broad belts of fertile plains, but otherwise, the country is a pronounced highland, with mountain plateaus, deep valleys and ravines, and ranges of sharp volcanic mountains, the summits of which are mostly lost in the clouds. Towards the Caribbean, the ground falls away in a fairly level slope. But on the west, where the Cordilleras reach their highest in volcanic peaks such as those of Agua, Fuego, Sta. Maria and Simil, the transition to the lowlands is so abrupt that one can almost literally take one step out into space and fall a couple of thousand feet without a break. The rivers fall in huge torrents towards the sea, and the roads, following the sides of the gorges, hang over precipices or cling dizzily to perpendicular cliffs.

The three climatic zones, *tierra caliente*, *tierra templada* and *tierra fría* are in such a country, as is natural, distinctly marked, and in the course of a few hours one may pass from the tropic vegetation and intense heat of primeval forest to colder tracts above, of an almost desert character. Owing to the presence of the high mountain ranges, the rainy seasons vary considerably in the different provinces, but comprise as a rule the summer months from May to October. In November, the sky begins to clear, and in December, the country appears once more like a garden, until by the end of April it is scorched and dusty after the long dry period.

Guatemala is naturally rich. On the Pacific coast one finds sugar, coffee, spices and cocoa in great quantities ; the plantations give a splendid yield, and the productiveness of the soil in proportion to area is unique. On the marshy east coast, the banana thrives excellently, and in the highlands, maize, wheat and corn are grown, while the finest coffee in the world ripens as far up as 1,600 metres above sea level. In the northern districts, there are huge forests of mahogany, cedar and sapodilla, while the mountains hold a wealth of minerals. Gold, copper, tin and quicksilver occur in great quantity, but the places where they are found have not been investigated to anything like their full extent, far less exploited. In many cases,

they are so difficult of access that only the Indians know of their whereabouts, and conceal the knowledge jealously from all strangers seeking the way, the latter often paying with their lives for their venture.

Means of communication in the interior are but poorly developed. From shore to shore, and touching the capital on the way, runs a line of railroad, built with American money, and along the west coast a branch line goes up to the Mexican frontier, forming a small part of the not yet completed Pan-American Railway, designed at some future time to connect up the two mighty continents of North and South America. For the rest, traffic proceeds by paths and tracks, marked, it is true, on the maps as highways proper, but in reality nothing but narrow mule-roads. Travel is therefore a matter of considerable difficulty, and the more remote provinces are only exceptionally visited by white men. Here the Indians live out their lives, unaffected by what passes in the world without, and holding still by their ancient customs and traditions, as in the days before the Spaniards discovered the country.

It was at the beginning of the sixteenth century that Don Pedro de Alvarado conquered the whole of what is now called Central America, and made the land subject to Spain. The well-armed Spanish troops found it an easy matter to terrorise the unwarlike inhabitants, who almost

immediately surrendered to a handful of disciplined soldiers. The new masters then proceeded to exploit the country in the most ruthless fashion, plundering, impoverishing and oppressing their subjects, and massacring the peaceable Indians to a fearful extent. The latter were indeed treated more as beasts than as human beings ; it was regarded almost as an act of piety to transfer as many *mozos* as possible to another world. An additional incentive here was the unparalleled fanaticism of the priests, who preached their Latin dogmas with blood and fire to the altogether uncivilised and uncomprehending heathen. That the country could hardly flourish during this period is obvious enough.

The period of Spanish rule lasted until as late as 1821, when Guatemala, at the head of the remaining Central American possessions, declared itself independent, and secured its emancipation from foreign dominion. A federation was formed, with Guatemala at the head. But neither the ruling class nor the people themselves were sufficiently advanced to stand alone. Violent civil wars raged during the following years, none of the confederate states being willing to acknowledge the superiority of another. And from 1839, the various republics go their separate ways. This brings us to the history of Guatemala in modern times. Roughly speaking, the frontiers of the country were fixed



as they now stand, embracing a territory of about 125,000 square kilometres, with about two million inhabitants. The so-called conservative party, consisting of old Spanish families with the priesthood at their head, had the power in their hands. Revolutions, counter-revolutions and civil wars flourished ; not until 1871 was the political power transferred to the more advanced liberals, who have retained their position until this year. The liberalism of 1870, however, was of course antiquated in the eighties, and counted as rank conservatism in 1920.

General Rufino Barrios was the leading man in Guatemala after 1873. An indomitable will and fervent patriotism were the characteristic features of his presidency. The religious societies, which had played so great a part in the politics of the country, were dissolved, the power of the priesthood was weakened, and also that of the old Spanish families. Liberal reforms were carried out, if not in reality, at any rate on paper, schools were cultivated, and the industries of the country—agriculture in particular—encouraged in every way. Barrios even took up the old idea of a Central American Union, but met with little encouragement from the neighbouring states. And it was in an attempt to impose the principle upon them by force that he met his death, in an encounter with the army of Salvador in 1885.

Lisandro Barillas succeeded him, and remained

in power until 1892, when the only free presidential election in the history of the Republic took place, resulting in an overwhelming majority for Barrios' cousin, Don Jose Maria Reyna Barrios. He, however, was careless and extravagant to such a degree that in a very short time he had brought the country to a state of economical ruin. In 1898 he was murdered, and the office of president passed to Manuel Estrada Cabrera.

In order to understand exactly the events of later years, it is necessary to glance at the complicated character of the population in Guatemala, and then see how the system of government acted about the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries.

Though the Republic is strictly democratic in theory, there is nevertheless a sharply defined class distinction.

The ancient Creole families, that is to say, the descendants of pure-blooded Spaniards born in Central America, have throughout constituted the leading party both politically and intellectually. This is due partly to the fact that the entire staff of officials was originally recruited from among the Creoles, partly to their superior education, which, though it might seem poor enough by European standards, is enormously superior to that of the rest of the people; and finally, also to the fact that these families

controlled, and to a great extent owned, the cultivated parts of the country. Though their wealth consists almost exclusively in the possession of landed property, they themselves invariably reside in the cities, only occasionally visiting their *fincas* (plantations). Energy and initiative are sadly lacking. Rather than break new ground and improve their old methods of cultivation, they will sit with folded arms and watch foreign capital acquiring great tracts of territory, and foreigners making fortunes. Their one great interest is politics; whether they understand it or not, they must have a hand in the game, and to this all other interests are subordinated.

The Creoles are now to a very large extent mixed with foreign elements. The great majority have Indian blood in their veins, and the crossing of race produces a type generally inferior in point of culture to the pure-blooded Spanish forbears. New blood from the middle classes has also gradually commenced to thrust aside the old aristocracy. But even with a high degree of intelligence, it is difficult for an outsider to make any headway without some warrant of kinship or protection from higher up in the social scale. It is asserted that birth no longer counts in regard to preferment. But in the first place, the opportunities for education are very much restricted, and further, an upstart must have so

numerous and so powerful friends to get his due, that it is, practically speaking, still in the power of the ruling class to concede advancement or the reverse.

The middle class type, where the cross between Indian, Negro and Creole is even more widespread, is known as *ladino*. These *ladinos* count for little in political respects, but form a neutral stock of artisans, storekeepers, tradesmen and minor officials, especially in the country districts. In the eastern parts, they are often found as manual labourers. In exceptional cases they may succeed in rising to more distinguished posts, but with their natural indifference and low cunning they form as a rule the most unreliable section of the population, and the least engaging.

Finally, under these, comes the great mass of pure-blooded Indians. Slow of wit, uneducated and disinclined to all forms of change, they have never provided any favourable ground for political agitation. On the other hand, they furnish excellent material for the armies of the Republic, and often rise, as soldiers, to positions of considerable trust. Here, of course, disinclination for independent political activity, and their inherent respect for government and officialdom generally, are distinctly advantageous. These *mozos* are, however, mostly found as the principal element in the working agricultural population.

There are two categories of this class; the

*colonos*, who are settled on the plantations, and the *jornaleros*, or day-labourers, who contract to work for longer or shorter periods.

The former are given a small piece of land to cultivate on their own account, in return for work in the plantations so many months of the year ; the latter are paid a daily wage. Theoretically, every *mozo* is free to dispose of his labour as he pleases, but in point of fact, they are bound to the property by economical ties. They cannot leave until they have paid off their debt to the owner, and it is thus to the latter's interest to encourage his subjects to get into debt beyond their power to free themselves. By granting of credit, and occasional loans in cash, the *mozo* is gradually brought into a position which forces him to remain on the place practically all his life. If he runs away, the owner can have him pursued and imprisoned by the authorities, all costs incurred in the process being charged to the ever-increasing debtor side of his account. Should he simply refuse to work, he is put in prison.

The wages paid are extremely low, amounting only to a shilling or so a day. As a rule, the work is done by contract, but since every *mozo* starts with a debt of several hundred *pesos*,<sup>1</sup> the usual advance on engagement, it is not remarkable that

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<sup>1</sup> A peso equals about twopence in English money.

in most cases he becomes a sort of serf, his pay going to the purchase of clothes, food and candles to set before the images of saints in the village church.

In the more remote provinces, however, there still exists other types of Indians, these being independent tillers of the soil, growing crops of maize, wheat or beans, sufficient to meet their own needs and leave a small margin for disposal in the market places of the towns. Along the roads one may encounter whole caravans of these *mozos* in their picturesque, highly coloured costumes, the man with the whole of his stall on his back, supported by the usual head-strap, the women carrying baskets or bundles on their heads. There are also some who earn their living solely as carriers. They can cover something like twenty-five miles a day with a load of fifty kilos, and thus represent an important factor in the difficult problem of local transport.

Next to the brutal and dishonest officials, the Indians' worst enemy is drink. The *aguardiente* is made from sugar cane, and sold for five *pesos* the litre. There are drinking places everywhere, in the cities, villages and along the roads, where the thirsty can satisfy their desire for alcohol. The quality of the spirit is poor in the extreme, but its effects are terrible. Men and women get drunk on it in like degree, and become unmanageable and quarrelsome. Ordinarily, the Indian is

peaceable enough, but under the influence of drink he is ready for almost any act of violence ; at such times, his machete is ready to hand, and mutilation and murder are part of the order of the day. Worst of all, the government encourages the sale of spirits, deriving a certain revenue from the proceeds. As long as this state of things continues, the *mozo* can never arrive at any degree of culture, but with his lack of education is doomed to degeneracy and gradual extermination.

These Indians, *ladinos* and Creoles, thus form the population of Guatemala, governed, as befits a Republic, by a President elected by the people. But in point of fact, until 1920, despotism of the worst kind prevailed, in its perfection of power unequalled anywhere, and far exceeding the once mighty autocracy of Russia. On paper, the democratic system was minutely detailed. But in Central America, there is a great gulf between the scales of justice and the sword.

Universal suffrage is the rule. This, however, does not prevent the Presidential Election from frequently degenerating into a purely farcical ceremony. Only the governing party's nominee—generally the President himself—is allowed to figure on the ballot papers, and opposition lists are purely and simply forbidden. Anyone bringing forward a rival candidate is looked after by the police, and will at best be detained in

prison until the election is over, if indeed he be not killed outright. More than once it has happened that such individuals, whose presence was undesirable to the government, have disappeared without leaving a trace, and their vanishment never explained. Anyone declining to vote is at once suspected, and may find himself driven to the ballot box at the point of the bayonet. Each plantation receives orders to the effect that so many *mozos* are to vote for the President during the four days the election lasts. Not infrequently, however, the number required exceeds the number of labourers on the place, in which case, the law-abiding proprietor has no choice but to send his hands in several times to vote at the same place, in order to make up the number. Delicate consciences are soothed with *aguardiente* or by other suitable means. In this way, the total number of votes recorded may amount to some few thousands in excess of the population. No one, however, ever worries about such a trifle—it merely serves as further evidence of the charming unanimity with which the President was re-elected!

As long as the President himself can keep his place and crush all opposition, his power is unlimited, all other state authorities being entirely under his control. He can appoint or depose any official at will, and through his ministers, who are merely his obedient creatures, he exercises



dominion over the various administrative departments. The state revenues find their way for the most part into the Presidential pocket, and he is careful not to keep anything in the shape of regular accounts. Nor, indeed, would any such be expected; he merely follows the rule established by his predecessors. His salary amounts to about a thousand American dollars per annum. Cabrera, however, managed in the course of his twenty-two years of power to lay aside, out of this modest sum, a fortune of 150 millions. The army is solely and entirely under the orders of the President, as also the police, which has developed ever more and more along the lines of an extensive spy system, where every one is watched by every one else. Every family of any importance has spies among the servants, or even among members of the family itself. And woe to any who speak ill of the government in power! There is an ancient Indian poison, slow in action, and difficult to detect, which may easily find its way to the food of any so incautious as to speak too freely.

The president chooses his ministers from among his most faithful adherents. They act merely as his advisers, and have no voice whatever in the final decision of affairs.

Beside the government, there is a Congress elected by popular vote. But as the election of members proceeds after the same principles as

that of the President himself, the latter has the entire Assembly in his power, and no laws are ever passed without previous approval from the highest quarter. Should, nevertheless, the opposition make itself felt, then the emoluments of the senators are simply withheld, or as an alternative, a company of soldiery may be sent to give greater emphasis to the wishes of established authority.

A similar state of things prevails in the courts of law. Heaven help the judge who ventures to find otherwise than in agreement with the presidential interest !

Local authorities are under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of the Interior. Each department has its own governor, who is at the same time *jefe politico*. These officials, who are appointed by the President, watch over the maintenance of the laws as far as is consistent with their own interests, collect taxes, and administer generally within their own district. Each has under him a staff of minions, all themselves tyrants in miniature as far as their power extends. Far removed from the central authority, without adequate control, and with little or no education, they do their best to impoverish their country and oppress the *moxos* in every imaginable manner. To complain is of little use, as they have always influential friends in the courts ready to take their part.

Throughout the entire administration of the country runs a red trail of corruption. The President and his ministers procure additional revenues for themselves by granting concessions and the like. Subordinate officials collect tribute from their subjects for taking their side. The postmasters steal the letters, and the police pocket the fines paid into court. Altogether, one may say that everybody does his best to fleece his neighbour to the greatest possible extent. In this respect moral principles are about as useful as chewing-gum. There are, of course, exceptions, but in Guatemala these exist solely to prove the rule.

The laws appear to have been made to be evaded. The moneyed classes can easily purchase freedom from obligations, save in regard to offences of a political character, in which case the utmost severity is used. Other misdemeanants are condemned, it is true, but their sentence is not always carried out, being frequently overlooked through carelessness or wilful neglect to enforce it. Or the prisoner may have got away long before. In the more remote districts, where the prisons are in a particularly dilapidated state, the local authorities endeavour to compensate for the defect by shooting the suspect at once, in order to avoid the risk of reprimand from higher quarters in case of his escaping prior to the trial.

These innumerable abuses rarely come to the

ears of the public. Every one fears for his own skin, and deems it wiser to keep silence. The freedom of the press exists only in name. In reality, a strict government censure prevails, and any undesirable utterance is promptly suppressed.

Obviously the whole of this rotten and antiquated system of government is based on the sole principle—might is right. As long as the President has money in his treasury and soldiery in every town, he keeps his place. As a consequence, the army is also favoured to an extreme degree, though it has never attained to much above the level of comic opera. There is some sort of universal conscription, but almost any one can obtain exemption by payment, so that the forces are recruited for the most part among the *mozos*. Should any augmentation of the available strength be required, this is obtained by simply forcing a certain number of civilians to join. They are called volunteers, it is true, but their voluntary enlistment is ensured by a rope round the wrists and a bayonet in the rear. Generally speaking, the Indians make good soldiers, but their drill and equipment are beneath contempt. The pay of the army rarely penetrates further than to the generals; the rank and file go about in rags and beg. A soldier short of cash will not hesitate to sell his ancient gun and cut himself a wooden staff instead. Proper



BAREFOOTED TROOPERS.



INDIAN TYPES.

(After Maudslay.)

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uniform is a luxury peculiar to the larger towns ; in the villages, a bit of facing or a stripe, tacked on to the usual dirty shirt, is the sole distinguishing mark. Army boots are non-existent, but the army fights as well on its bare feet. It is only the colonels and generals—of which, by the way, there is one to about every hundred men—who can afford to stick their feet in a pair of dilapidated half-boots and deck their red tunics with gold trappings hung about anyhow. All the higher commands are filled by the President's candidates, who, of course, are entirely dependent upon him, and mere tools in the hands of the government.

The rank and file, like the population generally, are without education. It is in the interest of the authorities to keep them as ignorant as possible, in order that the masses may be more easily led. True, Cabrera was constantly declaring himself the children's friend, and a great agitation was set on foot to show the rest of the world what splendid progress the schools of the country had made during his term of office. So-called Temples of Minerva, wooden buildings in the Grecian style, were built, and young people assembled every year for solemn festivals and processions, all designed to throw dust in the eyes of the easily deluded people. Every city, every town must have one of these edifices as a symbol of the new educational movement. But the whole thing was an elaborate piece of bluff.

About 50 per cent. of the schools existed only on paper, and those that actually were in being lacked competent teaching staff. The teachers could neither read nor write, and their pay was two and a half American dollars *per mensem*. Every one of them, therefore, naturally took on some additional occupation, in which the children were enlisted to help with the work in place of going to school. It is not surprising that the level of culture among the people was hardly raised to any great degree by such means.

The Republic has, indeed, under the old government, declined rather than progressed. The state revenues have diminished, obligations increased, and the rate of exchange fallen to less than one-twenty-fifth of the original value. The entire trade of the country is in foreign hands; the natural resources are neglected or disregarded altogether. Energy, initiative and capital are wanting, industries generally are in a miserable state, and the few considerable fortunes that exist have not infrequently been more or less fraudulently acquired. Lowering of moral standards and incipient degeneration have at all times fostered individuals of base character. And yet, after all, one cannot but feel a certain pity and sympathy for such a nation, which in former times ranked far higher in the scale of civilisation, and which even now exhibits to the foreigner the relics of its better qualities.



Kindliness and hospitality have always been a leading national characteristic here.

Guatemala is exceptionally rich in natural resources. But the country will hardly make any real progress until its leading men have swept away the old corrupt social system. The despotic power of the presidential office must be done away with, corruption must be checked, education must be conducted on proper lines, and the abuse of *aguardiente* be abolished before the Republic can arrive at any sound condition of order. Not until then can Guatemala claim a leading place among its neighbours, a place which belongs to it by right in virtue of its size and population.

For a long time disaffection smouldered within its borders, but it was not until April of this year that the opposition felt strong enough to come forward openly, and in April it grasped the only means in its power for overthrowing the old regime, to wit, revolution.

The foregoing unflattering picture also refers to the time immediately preceding the fall of Cabrera. The coming year was to show how far the new President Herrera and his men had fulfilled the great hopes centred in them by a critical present.

And now we return to the day when four Swedes arrived in the capital, and all unintentionally became eye-witnesses of the sudden rise of

modern democracy to power in the ancient and diseased state of Guatemala.

When, in 1773, the old Spanish capital, Antigua, was destroyed by an earthquake, with all its churches, convents and palaces, it was decided to move to a site with surer foundation, and the plain where the present capital is now situated was chosen. In ancient times the place was called Valle de las Vacas, or the Valley of Cows, after the first ranch established there by Ector de la Barrera, one of Alvarado's generals, in the fifteenth century. On the highest point, Cerro del Carmen, a small chapel was built, and from there one has to this day the finest view of the city.

To the south stretch the unending rows of one-storied houses, covering an enormous expanse, with churches and public buildings showing up like white flowers amid ploughed fields. Surrounding it is the brown-scorched plain, framed in blue mountain ranges, behind which, to the south and south-west, the volcanic peaks of Pacaya, Agua and Fuego rise amongst threatening clouds. To the northward the territory is more broken, with wavy lines of hills and deep *barrancos* (ravines) gradually leading over to a higher mountain range, where ridges and rugged outlines are thrust like pieces of scenery one amongst the rest. And over all hangs a thin veil of dust and smoke, for it is at the close of the dry season,

and the plantations are busy burning twigs and plants for next year's crop. A pale sun shines through the mist, changing the mountains to golden yellow and violet towards night.

On entering the city, however, the pleasant impression vanishes at once.

Here the dust whirls in thick clouds, penetrating everywhere—through one's clothes, into mouth and nostrils, into the eyes and the pores of the skin. One literally eats dust, sneezes dust, and weeps tears of dust, until habit has hardened the mucous membrane to the plague. The thoroughfares lie hot, glaring and straight as if drawn with a ruler ; north and south run the avenues, crossed at right angles by the shorter *calles*, or streets. The paving is composed partly of holes full of dirt, partly of altogether unnecessary and casually deposited heaps of cobblestones, among which the remains of an old tram-line, long since past its time, twines its rusty rails. And house on house in endless perspective. But of these only every second or third is occupied ; the rest are in ruins.

In 1918, it should be explained, the whole region was shaken by the most violent earthquake in the recent history of Guatemala. On Christmas Day the earth began to tremble ; sometimes the movement was up and down, then again sideways. And at every new shock a handful of houses went down as if they had been built of sand or cardboard.

Walls cracked in two, roofs fell in, church towers crashed down, burying adjacent buildings and human beings under the ruins. After a few hours the once well-built city was nothing but a smoking mass of debris, and the authorities repented bitterly that ever they had given up Antigua.

The sufferings of the people were indescribable. Those not killed on the spot were rendered homeless, and ran wailing about the streets, frightened out of their wits, and dreading a fresh outbreak every minute. It was a perfect triumph of misery. All the world sent help in the form of money and necessities, which were landed by the shipload at Puerto Barrios. But neither one nor the other served the cause of the stricken city. Millions found their way to the President's private treasury, and provisions were sent on mules over the frontier to Honduras, and sold there for the account of a few sharp-witted ministers. And thus it is that the city to this day lies for the most part in ruins.

Public buildings, schools, churches, theatres, museums, all are in the same hopeless state of desolation in which they were left by the earthquake. Pillars totter ready to fall, windows form wry parallelograms instead of rectangles, bits of roof hang down the outsides of the walls like great grey rags, and the footway is littered with heaps of stucco ornaments and shattered cornices. Here



A RUINED CHURCH.

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and there a cross in black paint may be seen on a wall ; a mark set by the authorities to indicate that the house was unfit for human habitation and must be pulled down, and rebuilt from the foundations. A payment of some few thousand *pesos* to the President, however, would secure the painting of a circle surrounding the cross, to denote that the necessary repairs were considered to have been effected. And the owner could leave his ruin standing, untouched and empty as before.

The cemetery in particular presents a scene of utter devastation. The dead are buried for the most part in burial chambers of masonry above ground ; in the case of the poorer class, these are set up in the form of long, high walls, with compartments side by side and one above another several tiers up, the opening in front being sealed with a simple inscribed plate. Wealthy families have their private enclosed burial sites on a smaller scale, but following the same system, generally with some ill-chosen piece of decorative work at the top. On the night of the earthquake, however, all this was demolished, and it is said that something like eight thousand dead were literally shaken from their graves, threatening pestilence to the city ; the corpses were therefore burned in a gigantic bonfire, the crackling flames of which by night threw a ghastly light over the terrified community, many fancying the last day

had come. The dark cavities still yawn like empty eye-sockets, and the sculptured figures that adorned the family vaults stand on their heads instead of on their feet. No attempt whatever has been made to restore the Campo Santo to its original condition ; it is hard to imagine any greater instance of indifference to the memory of the dead.

There is not much for the sightseer in the city. After a few hours' wandering about among the ruins, all equally depressing in their devastation, one has had enough. If one does happen to find a church slightly more whole than its neighbours, modern restoration has for the most part destroyed what might have been left of fine old Spanish art. The broad boulevard, with its double row of flowering acacias and its huge Temple of Minerva at the back, was once surrounded by private villas and beautiful gardens. Now it is a waste tract, the wealthy residents having built a new quarter for themselves out at La Reforma. Here also are to be found some newly-built schools, hospitals and military academies, while the President's country estate of La Palma is close outside.

As for the hospital, it was a mere Potemkin palace. The outer walls, it is true, look new and fine, but the interior equipment has never existed. If a distinguished stranger came to the place, he would be hurriedly shown past the long façade,



where the patients stood waving at the windows. That those same patients had been fetched that morning from the prison, to play the part of invalids, he was never told. The whole thing was just one of the many little stage managements used by Cabrera to throw dust in the eyes of foreigners.

But though the city itself presents few attractive resting places for the eyes, the life of the streets, on the other hand, is all the more picturesque. There are about a hundred thousand inhabitants. The grand Plaza, where the cathedral stands with its two amputated towers, is always crowded. In the evenings a third-rate military band plays in the pavilion, giving out more noise than music, and below Creoles, *ladinos* and Indians promenade in a motley throng. Passers-by nod to one another, exchange greetings, discuss family affairs, or—in something very like a whisper—comment upon the latest political scandal. It is as well to be careful, for there is pretty sure to be a government spy somewhere at hand.

The girls wear a coloured shawl thrown over the head, with the big tortoiseshell comb sticking up below. Their eyes are bright, their gait as lithe as a panther's. The men stand in groups looking on, smoking black cigarettes and exchanging opinions as to the pretty legs and open-work silk stockings of the *señoritas*. Now and again an automobile hurries past, with members

of the aristocracy leaning back among the soft cushions ; the men in irreproachable long frock coats—the favourite dress ; the ladies with fans and mantillas and a dark red rose behind the ear, as behoves a true Carmen.

There is no noise of traffic in the streets. The Indians walk barefooted, and the wheels of the equipages are rubber-tired. Only occasionally does one hear the rumble of a cart, or the hoot of a motor horn. Otherwise, all is quiet—an almost unnatural silence.

For a study of the actual life of the people, however, the market-place is the site to choose. A covered hall or bazaar occupies the centre, but the major part of the buying and selling is done in the open, on the square itself or in the adjacent streets. Vendors display their various commodities, there is a haggling and cheapening and chaffering precisely as in all other similar places. Most of the business is done by the *mozos*. They come in from the villages on the outskirts, with their wares and stall on their backs, loaded up with fruit, vegetables, fowls, eggs and other useful produce, taking up their stand where they please, and spreading out their stock-in-trade in the gutter. Swarthy-skinned, dark-haired, the women, often with two heavy plaits down their back, sit there patiently waiting for customers to perceive their proffered dainties. The sun shines on their tall straw hats and the many-

coloured *huipili* of the women—a sort of wide blouse with patterns woven in red, blue or black. In point of colour and composition, these are often strikingly like our own Swedish home products. The weaving is done in the villages, still by the same primitive methods which were in use when the land was discovered by the Spaniards, and form, with carved calabash and simple pottery, examples of Indian home industry. In certain provinces silk shawls are also made, and over towards the Mexican frontier, carpets. The prices, according to our ideas, are ridiculously low.

On changing one's money to the coinage of the country, one receives, in exchange for a few American dollars, a whole armful of dirty *peso* notes. Originally, both sorts of money were of equal value, but at the present time twenty-five or twenty-eight *pesos* go to the dollar, and it is not long since they were down as low as forty. The finances of the country are considered sound as long as the note-presses are working properly but if a stray nut were to come off, occasioning an unexpected stoppage in the output, the state would be on the verge of bankruptcy. And by way of precaution, the care of these delicate machines has been entrusted to American hands, and a new *peso* note, worth about twopence, is a handsome piece of engraving, with railway trains, steamboats, volcanoes and birds in all imaginable

colours ; a thing worth framing and hanging on the wall.

Apart from the foreign ministers and the staffs of the various legations, very few foreigners reside in the city ; there are a few English and American business men, a Dutchman or so, and a number of Germans ; the last-named, however, have since the war largely migrated out to the villages. Most of the banks and big business houses are in the hands of Jews. But on the outskirts of the town, behind a hill where the ancient Spanish fortress of San Jose rises grey and venerable from the height, is a big leather factory close to the road, and here lives a Swede, Gustaf Hammar, the manager. The buildings, machinery and plant are all his work and his property, built up from nothing. A resident of some years' standing in the place, he has succeeded in making the Swedish name known and honoured throughout the city, and the firm has, by dint of stubborn perseverance, gradually worked its way up to a leading position in the market. True, the earthquake destroyed nearly everything, but Hammar was not the man to lose courage. In contrast to other similar undertakings, it was not long before work was resumed ; the thousand difficulties he had to contend with were merely a spur to further exertions.

There are no doubt two or three more of our countrymen in Guatemala, and, it is to be hoped,

men of position. But this one man might almost suffice in himself, for he has carried the Swedish colours there in a manner hard to equal. A dozen mediocrities together could not have done better. Our expert interpreter and assistant at first, he soon became our very good friend, placing his knowledge and power at our disposal in every possible way. Save for Hammar's numerous services, we should often have been awkwardly situated indeed, and I take this opportunity of expressing the hearty thanks of four of his countrymen who shared with him the perils and difficulties of a revolution.

It was at the beginning of Easter week when we took up our quarters at the Hotel Grace. The city lay silent and deserted, most of the people having gone into the country, and all business, of course, being at a standstill during the holidays. In the half-empty hotel we found a few sleepy visitors, at a loss what to do with themselves; they declared languidly that Guatemala City was unquestionably the dullest and most lifeless place in the world. Nothing ever happened there. Never a spice of anything sensational to touch up the monotony of everyday life. And they advised us to make tracks for Antigua as soon as we could, if only to escape from the unutterable boredom of the capital.

We acted on the hint at once.

The very next day we managed to secure two

cars, which were to convey our four mortal bodies up to the hills in search of new impressions.

And off we started.

For some little way outside the city it was fairly decent going, but then the roads began developing sandhills, and later, ravines of tumbled stone, to an alarming degree. The hills grew steeper and steeper, the jolting more and more pronounced, the stones ever sharper. Add to this a two-foot layer of dust, which certainly did serve dutifully to conceal the worst of the pitfalls, though without detracting from their effect—and you have a faint idea of the worst motor road any one of us had ever travelled in his life. The white triangle on the front of the radiator, however, indicated that the car was a Hudson, which encouraged our hopes of getting through somehow after all. And as it turned out, both motor and driver were evidently well accustomed to this so-called road, surmounting all obstacles in a manner equally creditable to both. The worst places we simply jumped—one, two, three and over the ditch or the dyke or whatever it happened to be—and the car held together when it came down on the other side.

We passed long lines of Indians on their way in to the city, carrying their heavy burdens with an apparent ease as if they had been no more than a knapsack packed for a picnic, and often moving at the double. But the first time we

encountered a heavy dining-table, to seat eight, hurrying over the crest of a hill with a small *mozo* underneath, it made us open our eyes a little, until after a while we grew accustomed to the sight of other pieces of furniture, such as wardrobes, chests of drawers and pianos, transported in likewise. Men, women and children all carried something in the way of a load, and all were equally in a hurry. If one felt tired, he would sit down without ceremony in the middle of the road for a spell, and after a journey of any considerable distance a fire would be lit, over which the simple fare of *tortillas* and *frijoles negras* would be prepared alfresco.

At every village we were met with a barking of dogs and a scurrying of fowls between the wheels. Now and again a cart on high, creaking wheels appeared, drawn by three mules toiling and straining with all their might to get the heavy load up hill. At a turn of the road lay a dead beast, with dogs and vultures fighting for the remains. Altogether, the journey could hardly be called monotonous; there was something to be seen all the way.

Just before the worst up gradient commences, the little city of Mixco is reached. It lies huddled up on a small piece of rising ground. The name Mixco is Indian for "in the clouds"; and there is a fine view from here right across the plateau to Guatemala City. Like all other communities

here, this little city in the clouds has its toy garrison, and we had to show our passports before we were allowed to proceed. The plaza was alive with a many-coloured crowd, and marketing in full swing. Close by lay a huge church, shaken to bits, the bells having been carried out from the ruins and hung up on wooden erections outside the old carved doors.

We went on our way, the road now twining ever more steeply upward, with a precipitous drop on one side, and sheer cliff rising on the other. Here and there a cross stood by the wayside, marking the spot where some traveller had been murdered, or had fallen into the abyss; to judge from the number of these, the road seemed far from safe. After a while we reached the highest point, and from there onward had only to rattle along down towards the broad valley of Antigua.

The city was already in sight when the car was suddenly hailed by a personage in the uniform, apparently, of a picture-palace doorkeeper, who planted himself straight in front of us, waving his hand. His magnificent tunic was a mass of red and green and gold. On further acquaintance, however, he turned out to be the local commandant, deputed to bid us welcome to Antigua in the name of the Government.

Six amiable brigands with wooden guns comprised his escort.

*" Buenas tardes, señores, Alto ! "*



"*Que hay?*"

"My house is your house, señores."

"*Muchas gracias*—but we've already taken rooms at the hotel."

"In that case, señores, the hotel is yours."

"Is the Governor in the city?"

"*Sí, Señor.*"

"Good, then we shall see you there, no doubt.  
*Adios, Señor Commandante!*"

"*Adios!*"

And our gold-embroidered friend stepped politely aside to let us pass.

Antigua lies in a hollow, right at the foot of the extinct volcanoes of Agua and Fuego; the former rising to a height of 4,100 metres above sea-level. The climate here is considered superior to that of Guatemala City, and the place is quite nicely kept. It is chiefly renowned for its numerous ruins of ancient Spanish churches, of which there are about a hundred, all equally dilapidated and left entirely to themselves. The earthquake of 1773 destroyed the place, and rebuilding since has been confined to the strictly necessary.

The principal monuments are the Cathedral, the Church of Grace, Sta. Clara, and the Escuela de Cristo; on the remaining sites, save where modern restoration work has altogether destroyed all traces of the ancient culture, only blank walls and shattered domes remain to greet the visitor. Here and there a painting still hangs more or less

intact, but most of them are from an indifferent period, chiefly copies, and of but slight artistic value. Now and again one may find an altar unharmed, but in the choir of Sta. Clara a mule was grazing, and in the Church of Grace an Indian family had taken up its quarters, with chick and child and a varied collection of domestic animals.

The Escuela de Cristo is, if not the best preserved, at any rate the most picturesque, united as it is with an old convent, the open cloisters of which are still standing. The good Father who showed us round was an amiable man, but in answer to our question as to whether any of the old church silver still remained, he shrugged his shoulders and explained that it had all been sold, unfortunately, by his predecessors, so that he, to his extreme regret, was unable to sell any to us !

The old Capuchin monastery, too, with its many underground passages from the monks' cells to those of the nuns, is worth a visit, especially one part where the cells are built in a circle surrounding a central common chamber. Otherwise, the ruins are, as mentioned, in such a state of dilapidation that there is little of interest to be found.

According to promise, we paid our duty call at the Governor's, and left our letters of introduction, adorned with fantastic Government stamps. His Excellency's reception-room was somewhat of a curiosity in its way, being roughly as follows :



ANTIGUA: WITH THE VOLCANO OF FUEGO.



ANTIGUA: THE PLAZA.

*(After Maudslay.)*

*To face page 180.*



The walls were papered in light green, with strawberry-coloured flowers. Against one wall stood a plain wooden sofa, made in U.S.A., with a flaming red cushion in one corner and one of the hue of aquamarine in the other. In front of this, a tripod of white metal, six foot high, with an epergne-like top in several tiers of glass, into which artificial flowers were stuck ; between the legs of the tripod was set a glowing crimson dish of cut glass, containing wax fruits of every sort. Grouped about this slender central ornament were half a dozen buffalo chairs for guests to sit in, and between each pair a huge porcelain spittoon painted with flowers in gold, red and Prussian blue. A strip of carpet was placed under the tripod, otherwise the floor was bare. Above the sofa was an enormous mirror, hung at an angle of forty-five degrees to the wall, and surmounted by a stuffed green *quetzal*—the bird which has become the national emblem—with yard-long tail-feathers drooping down the frame. Below the mirror, a faded photograph of a well-nourished Spanish lady, flanked on either side by a couple of stretched lizard skins, and beside these again, other photographs in wide half-circles, about oval porcelain plaques of Venus and Minerva. On a piece of plush at the end of the sofa, a guitar inlaid with mother-of-pearl. Immediately facing this group, which formed as it were the centre of gravity, stood a gigantic musical box, with a

glass front to show the works inside, and a steel disc with "Tango Argentino" glittering like a sun in the rear. The third wall was occupied by a piano with glassware and shells on top, and above it another mirror with another green *quetzal* to match. On the fourth side were two windows carefully draped with some beribboned and rosetted material, in heavy folds, admitting the scantiest modicum of light.

The Governor and the Commandant sat down on the sofa, we on the chairs grouped about that monstrous tripod, and then the conversation began, as usual in Spanish-speaking countries, with the obligatory inquiries as to one's health.

"*Buenas tardes, señor.*"

"*Buenas tardes.* And how are you?"

"Very well indeed, thanks. And yourself?"

"Excellent. And the señora your wife? And your children? And your uncles and cousins? And your sister-in-law's last child? And your second cousins and their friends?"

And so on for an eternity, until relatives of every imaginable degree have had their turn. Not till then is it permissible to venture, cautiously and gently, to approach the business in hand.

"Is it allowed to take film pictures here?"

"No, but special permission can be granted. It would cost—oh, next to nothing." This last with an eloquent wink.

" Could one get a few Indians together for the purpose ? "

" Certainly. Everything shall be ready at San Antonio to-morrow. If the señor would be there about noon ? "

" Excellent."

And after a few more stereotyped phrases as to the precious health, the weather, and the coffee crop, our visit was at an end.

That evening our obliging friend sent the municipal *marimba* band to play at the hotel. The *marimba* is an instrument typical of Guatemala, and consists of a row of wooden sticks, of varying length, placed with the ends on two tightly drawn strings, the latter again fastened to a kind of table-frame. Under each piece of wood is hung a kind of organ pipe, open at the upper end, and with a varying number of holes at the sides. These serve as sounding cavities for the corresponding wooden keys, the bass being large and coarse, the treble small and thin. By striking the wooden keys with sticks wrapped round with rubber bands, a peculiar faint tone is produced, resembling somewhat that of an organ, or an ocarina. A good *marimba* orchestra consists of eight men and two tables. The players show great skill, and no music sheets are ever used, everything being played by ear. The people of Guatemala are musical as a rule, and their native melodies have a mournful minor ring.

On the following day we proceeded, as arranged, to the little town of San Antonio, situate about ten kilometres from Antigua. Our way took us by Ciudad Vieja, the earliest capital of Guatemala, founded as far back as 1525. It was here Don Pedro Alvarado settled down and built a stately palace for himself and his mistress, the beautiful Beatrice de la Cueva. But the pleasure was short-lived, for only ten years later all lay buried under the lava from the Agua volcano, and the site was given up, Antigua being then chosen. At the present day only the upper floor of the palace is above ground, but excavations have revealed rich treasures of chased silver vessels and artistically carved utensils.

The slopes are clad with wide-spreading plantations, where the finest coffee in the country—and, according to the owners, in the whole world—is grown. Some years back silkworm culture flourished also in these regions, but has now been given up entirely.

Even from a considerable distance we could hear that something unusual was afoot in San Antonio. Brass instruments were sounded, and a *marimba* joined in occasionally, while crackers were let off at intervals. When we drove up to the plaza, it was packed with people. The barefooted troops of the garrison stood drawn up on parade with their band and colours at the head. About fifty Indians, in their best Sunday



clothes, rushed forward to shake hands, and the infant school, ranged about the centre, shouted and waved hands exuberantly. There was a degree of excitement and to-do enough to make one dizzy.

When at last the lengthy ceremonial greetings were at an end, the entire congregation marched hand-in-hand twice round the plaza, while the band played a march and the *marimba* tried to make itself heard simultaneously with the latest and noisiest specimen imported from America. First of all came a few grey-headed generals, solemn of mien, leading their proud array. Then the Indians, in black tunics, short white drawers, high-crowned straw hats, and holding ornamented staves. Last of all came the women, in a many-coloured procession, with the infant school trailing at their heels. It really was a wonderfully picturesque sight, with the bright colours showing up clearly in the sun, and our films man smiled gleefully as he wound off reel after reel till the sweat poured off him.

The procession having dispersed, the children gave a brief exhibition of games, and then came the women's turn.

A little space was cleared in front of the *marimba*, and here a real Indian dance was given. To the sound of native melodies, they twirled and twisted their bodies, hopped on one leg or whirled round on both, all in a slow, languid time. From a

choreographic point of view, there was perhaps nothing very remarkable in their pirouetting; the whole performance was extremely simple, more grotesque, indeed, than graceful. The *prima ballerina* was a white-haired old crone with an infant on her back, so it will easily be understood that the dance was not of the acrobatic order. But the striped dresses and the many-coloured *huipilis*, the gold necklaces and the red ribbons in their heavy black plaits of hair looked magnificent. It was like a witches' dance of somewhat languid furies, in a well-staged pantomime.

The whole performance took about an hour; when it was over we were ready to express our thanks and return home.

But no. A wild, gesticulating palaver at once commenced, in which every one seemed to join. Surely the señores would stay to lunch at the city hall? It simply wouldn't do to leave the town without having tasted its *frijoles*.

And so, willy-nilly, we were led into a hall smelling of newly-cut grass, with which the floor was covered. On one of the end walls hung the Guatemala arms in a frame, on the other were two large mirrors, in front of which were placed a couple of toy ducks that could wag their heads and quack.

In the middle of the room was a large table laid for at least a score. And we were no more than four Swedes, and could consequently only

fill four places, but for all that no one else ventured to sit down. All our attempts at persuasion proved in vain. At last the *alcalde* confided to us in a whisper, that since it was impossible to seat *all* the notables of the place, numbering about sixty, at the same table, it would never do to let a few specially favoured enjoy the honour ; the resulting envy, hatred and malice would be terrible. If only to avoid bloodshed, he begged us most earnestly to spread ourselves out as far as possible, and fall to in splendid isolation upon what the local resources could provide.

There was thus no alternative but to sit down. With two burgomasters, three *alcaldes*, four councillors, eight generals, and some fifty Indian chiefs as witnesses, we sat there and swallowed down *frijoles negras*, roast veal and chicken by the spoonful—spoons being the only implements provided.

Not till this public banquet was at an end were we allowed to depart. It is likely that the evening in San Antonio proved lively enough for those that remained, with a sufficiency of brawling, for there was plenty of *aguardiente* about, half the company being in a state of mild intoxication before we left. Such things, however, form a necessary part of any respectable festival in an Indian town, if it would avoid the reproach of being hopelessly behind the times.

A few days later we were once more in the capital.

There was a sort of feeling in the air as of something about to happen, but no one could say what it was, or when it was to come.

The members of the Opposition party, called Unionists, had, ever since January, been taking a more threatening attitude, and openly challenged the Government. They had also been suppressed, annoyed, imprisoned and so forth, in due form, but for some unknown reason, again released, and were now generally treated with less severity than had been the case with former similar attempts to dispute the authority of an all-powerful president. How far the influence of the league had spread it was difficult to say, for its organisation was kept secret, and none but those implicitly trusted were allowed a glance behind the scenes. It was whispered, however, that in case of need, the whole country would side with the party.

The Unionists had been very quiet during the early part of the winter, then, in March, came the first public demonstration. The party demanded a new government, revision of the laws, administrative reforms, political freedom, and the abolition of the press censorship—in a word, the establishment of a reasonable liberal programme. The leaders of Congress promised to receive them on a certain afternoon, but when the procession, numbering several thousands, arrived at the Military Academy, where the

people's representatives happened to be assembled, mitrailleuses opened fire, by order of the President, scattering the masses, and leaving half a score of dead and wounded on the ground. The watchword of the Unionists was "no armed resistance, but reform by peaceable and legal means." Consequently, no further violence was shown on that occasion. But the incident served to increase the general hatred of Cabrera and his minions, who were already sufficiently detested after a decade or so of more than reckless tyranny.

The President, who had begun his career as a dram-lawyer in Quetzaltenango, and later been expelled from the place for some shady business, took part in the conspiracy against Barrios, and after the murder of the latter, set himself on the throne, with the words *j'y suis, j'y reste*. And all the attempts at removing him had hitherto proved fruitless. Several attacks had been made on his life, but fortune had always favoured him. Half Indian by birth, he based his power entirely on the support of the military, and when the country declared war on Germany, he made use of the opportunity to increase his already well-equipped artillery by the addition of modern field guns, machine guns and ammunition. His character was described as crafty, unscrupulous and cruel, and he managed to surround himself with an assembly of undisguised criminals, who obeyed his least behest. About six hundred death

sentences had recently been pronounced, of which none knew the exact particulars but himself, and it was said that lists of persons existed, with a cross against the name to indicate that the bearer was to be transferred to another world at the earliest opportunity.

It was no light matter, however, openly to defy this military power, well supplied as it was with technically perfect apparatus of destruction, and to fail was equivalent to death. Nevertheless, the Unionists ventured, planning their coup for the eighth of April.

On this day Congress assembled in one of the public buildings of the city, and declared as follows :

1. That the assembly could not be dissolved before a new order of things had been established, and members were, therefore, urged to bring with them bedding and provisions in case the negotiations should extend over some considerable time.

2. That the actions of President Manuel Estrada Cabrera were suggestive of insanity, and, in consequence, ten medical men should be deputed to go to La Palma and investigate.

The ten departed willingly enough, but being aware that to execute their instructions would have been to put their own necks in a noose, they wisely preferred to stop at the next street corner, smoke a cigarette and discuss the weather,

returning later to the Congress with their decision : perfectly correct, the old man's mad, sure enough.

" Good ! " cried the assembly. " Then we depose him. "

A very simple matter, indeed.

This done, Don Carlos Herrera was elected to the office of President, and his ministers appointed, whereupon Congress took a few hours' rest, and began seriously to consider what was the next thing to be done. Herrera had been elected, partly on account of the good repute in which his name stood throughout the country, partly by reason of his distinguished personal qualities and his great wealth, which should render him less likely to enrich himself at others' expense, and finally, because he was one of the few who had never till now concerned himself with politics. Handbills were run off and distributed, spreading the news, and soon the whole city was afoot. Great bodies of people marched through the streets, shouting and waving hands, embracing one another with congratulations on the opening of a new era. Patriotic speeches were made at street corners, motor-cars and other vehicles drove incessantly to and fro, packed with people ; there was a cheering and rejoicing, and tears of emotion were shed. The more energetic spirits procured tin cans and toy trumpets to add to the noise, and music played continually on the plaza all the evening.

Outside the government buildings and barracks in the centre of the city, the soldiery stood idly looking on. Most of them had been bought over already, and had graciously promised to hold themselves neutral until they were better able to determine which party it would be safer to join.

Two of Cabrera's minions were shot in the confusion. But no one took this much to heart. The main thing was to create a thoroughly festive atmosphere, and give way without reserve to the intoxication of the moment. All that evening the streets re-echoed with shouts of *viva!* and every one seemed to have gone mad. The twenty-two years of oppression were at an end, and in their place now dawned the day of freedom, equality and brotherhood. *Viva la libertad! Viva Don Carlos Herrera! Viva los unionistas!*

No one, however, troubled to inquire what the madman behind his guns at La Palma thought of it all.

Early next morning came his answer—in the form of machine-gun fire and shells dropping close in every quarter of the city. The streets were deserted, the festive atmosphere had vanished; bloodshed had commenced in earnest.

And now it was found that the Unionists were by no means prepared for decisive action. Their organisation was far from sound, and arms were



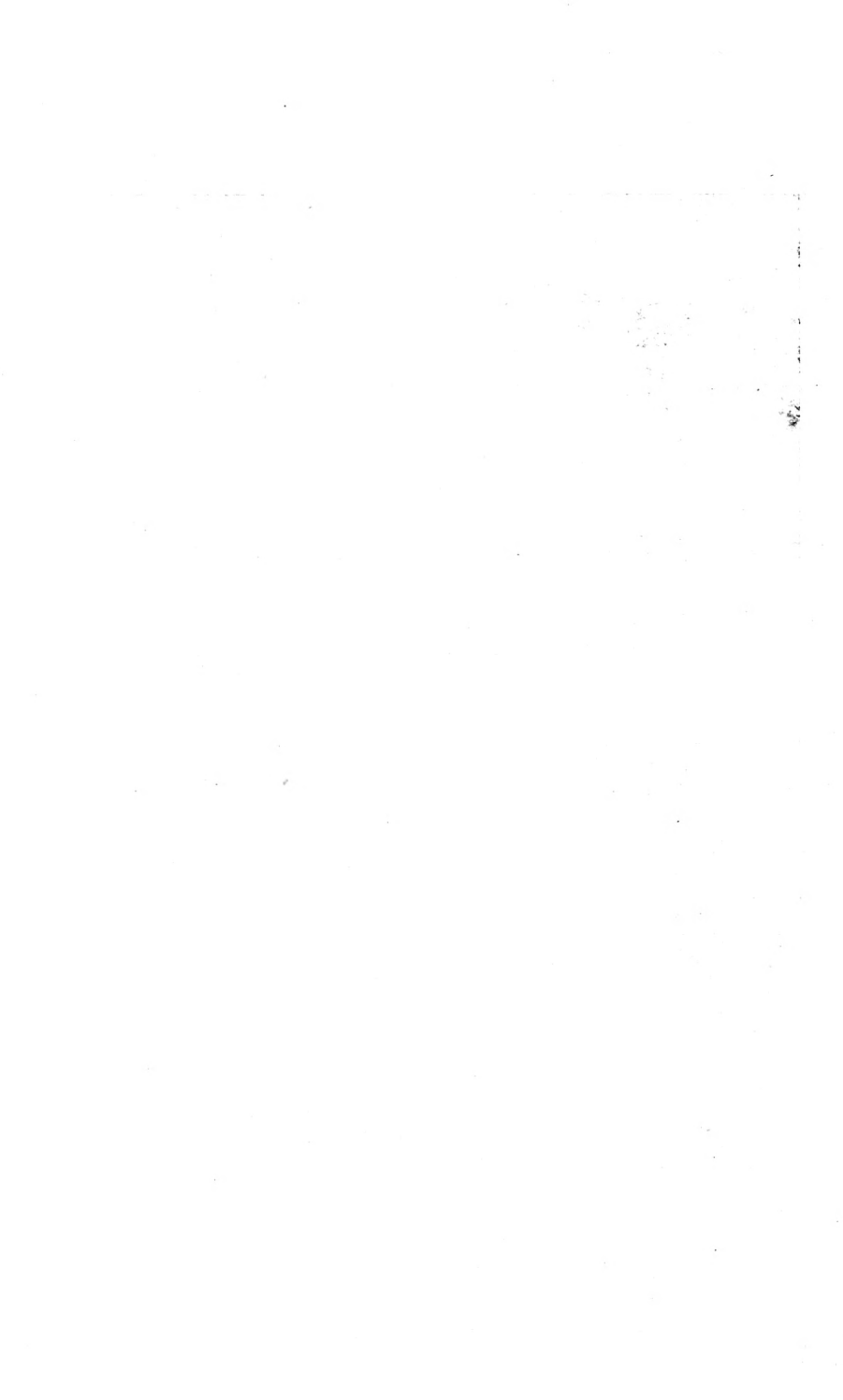


THE REVOLUTION IN THE CAPITAL.



A STREET BARRICADE.

*To face page 192.*



almost entirely lacking. An ill-omened confusion reigned at Headquarters. But with surprising speed, the more serious defects were remedied. All Government buildings in the city were systematically ransacked and plundered, and machine-guns, rifles and ammunition were produced from the most unlikely places. The barrel of a machine-gun would be discovered in a writing desk, and the mounting under what looked like a dustbin. A high-class confectioner's shop was found to have some hundreds of revolvers hidden behind the counter, and eight large pillow-cases in a bedding store proved to be stuffed with cartridges. Everything which could possibly be put to use was appropriated; knives, machetes, saloon rifles, shot-guns, axes and crowbars. And with youthful enthusiasm men fell to on the work of raising barricades and digging trenches in the streets.

Generals on foaming horses dashed through the hail of bullets at its fiercest, their splendid uniforms ablaze with gold, and sabres gleaming like flashes of light, exhorting their troops to courage and steadfastness. It was like a comic opera, but with music of a far more serious character. The shooting at first accounted for as many friends as enemies, but after white badges bearing the name "Unionista" had been distributed, the fire was more effective. And soon there was not an adult male in all the city

but wore the revolutionary token in his hat, or, better still, a portrait of the new President on his chest.

All this time a steady fire was maintained from La Palma and the two forts of San José and Matamoros. The lists of dead and wounded increased rapidly, and soon the provisional hospitals, established in theatres and picture palaces, were full. Cars with the Red Cross flag dashed incessantly through the streets, often with a dark-complexioned sister on the footboard, brassard round her arm, and a big machete stuck in her belt in case of need. There was no knowing. . . .

The water supply pipes were damaged, as also the electric cables, leaving the city in darkness from the first night. Telegraph and telephone were out of action. No news was published; each had to find out for himself what he wanted to know. The wildest rumours were current, and no one could give definite information about anything. Bullets whistled about one's ears, the machine-guns kept up a lively *tak-tak-tak*, quick-firers thumped away steadily like riveting machines, with the heavier guns grumbling out the bass. Shells fell in the most unexpected places, sending up great clouds of dust and debris. Shrapnel splattered like fierce hailstones on the roofs—in a word, it was war. All the powers of evil were abroad, all passions let loose.

Moaning and wailing were mingled with shouts of *Viva!* the death-rattle with encouraging trumpet blasts. It was a revolution, which, thanks to modern weapons, fell far outside the limits of the usual comparatively harmless demonstration of the sort in Central American republics.

But the world is now so weary of war and bloodshed, and all thereto pertaining, that it would be unpardonable to enter into details of the next few days' happenings.

Suffice it to say that the fall of the San José Fort—due partly to hunger, partly to buying over the defenders—decided the conflict, on the fourth day, in favour of the Unionists; for the fort commanded the position at La Palma entirely. By the following afternoon the revolutionaries, supported by troops from all over the country, were absolute masters of the situation. The firing then gradually ceased, and Cabrera surrendered, with the remainder of his forces, numbering about five thousand. The conditions of surrender were briefly as follows:—

1. Personal security for himself and his family;
  2. Property legally acquired to be respected;
- and
3. Cabrera himself to be judged by the court of his country.

While the conflict was at its height the foreign diplomatic representatives had worked feverishly to bring about an understanding between the

two parties. Several times a truce was proclaimed, only to be broken in the most reckless manner half an hour after. Not until the Unionists were perfectly sure of their victory, and Cabrera equally certain of his defeat, was a settlement arranged.

Throughout the disturbance, Hammar and we four other Swedes stayed at Grace's Hotel. This was a one-storied building in the usual Spanish style, with a large open patio in the centre. Thanks to solid walls and a corrugated iron roof, the place withstood most of the rifle and shrapnel bullets, save when they chanced to come whistling in through the windows. Only one shell fell in the annexe, where a serving maid lived, but without doing any great damage, having burst at the first contact with the roof-beams. But the girl had a nervous shock, which was not to be wondered at.

From the first day, the hotel had been placed in a state of defence. To the despair of the hostess, the big flower tubs in the patio were emptied, and the earth stuffed into sacks to build a bomb-proof shelter for the women and children. The tram-lines from the street outside were torn up and used for the roof. Earth and debris from a demolished building near at hand were shovelled on to barrows and into empty flour bags, and soon a real little miniature dug-out was fixed up under the one thick archway

of the house. The visitors threw themselves eagerly into the work, the various nationalities represented working amicably together to make the best of it. Mr. and Mrs. Grace led the way, superintending and ordering the work, always with a kindly encouraging word for any who would listen. Provisions were laid in, the stock of water increased, arms served out as far as they would go, and bandaging materials held in readiness. In a little time the hotel was transformed into a fortress. During the first few days, especially, it should be noted, there was reason to fear that the Cabrerists might attempt to outflank the city and fall upon the revolutionaries from the rear. In such case, the massacre would soon have been raging furiously, and each would have had to defend himself as best he could in the confusion.

Fortunately, however, it did not come to this.

Life in the hotel went on as peaceably as one could expect during a revolution, and the general feeling of security was increased when, on the last day, a couple of American marines were posted at the entrance, by the kindly forethought of the Legation. It was a little queer at first, with the constant firing, and the scream of shells, but one soon got used to it, and the noises became so familiar that one ceased to heed them ; indeed, it seemed almost uncomfortable somehow, when a longer pause than usual occurred. The feeling

of tension before an explosion is always worse than the report itself.

It was the same in the streets. On the first day, one ducked and ran at record speed across the street, later one took things more calmly, and waited till the fire slackened. If it grew too hot, one could take shelter in a doorway for a time. Even then, however, one had to be ever clearing the mortar from one's eyes, as it scattered about every time the doorpost opposite was struck.

Worst of all was having to remain in idleness when every one else had their hands full. We attempted to start a Swedish Flying Ambulance, but found it impossible to get hold of a car, all being already taken over. There was nothing to be done but put up with things as they were, chat with the guards posted at street corners, and take whatever chanced to come along.

Our voluntary neutrality, however, ended, nevertheless, in two warlike exploits.

The first was in endeavouring to help a party of Unionists, discovered utterly at a loss over a machine-gun that they could not manage to load. After much hesitation, we finally gave in to their earnest prayers, and managed, with united efforts, to jam a cartridge in the mechanism, effectively silencing that gun for the rest of the day. After this failure, which was greeted with a chorus of scornful observations, we found it



best for our safety to disappear round the nearest corner, resolved for the future to avoid meddling further with unfamiliar engines of destruction.

The second proceeding of a warlike character must, I regret to say, be entered under the heading of theft, pure and simple. On the first morning, when a storehouse immediately in front of our hotel was rushed by the mob, two of us followed immediately in the wake of the crowd in order better to view the scene of conflict. The building was packed with all manner of articles : books, furniture, domestic utensils, chandeliers, lamps, mirrors, carpets, washstands, etc., and in one room a coffee-pot was still boiling, left there by the Cabrerists in their hurried flight. In an open drawer close by, however, something yellow and blue was visible ; it proved to be a rolled up Venezuelan flag, hidden away there for some unknown reason. In a flash the idea was there ; we had no Swedish flag, but here, at least, were the materials ! And the national emblem of Venezuela was removed to the hotel, where willing hands soon cut away the red field, and in its place tacked on a yellow cross on dark blue ground, which looked very fine indeed. And after that the flag waved constantly outside our corner window, from an improvised flagstaff made of a roughly-trimmed broomstick.

Amid all the serious trouble there was no lack of humorous episodes. One day, for instance,

our hostess, discovering that she had run out of spices, sent two black boys to try and find the grocer who usually supplied her. After three hours in evident peril of their lives, the pair returned, with a delighted grin on their faces, dragging a big sack between them, which they set down triumphantly at Mrs. Grace's feet.

"Here you are, missus, we done that jes' fine!"

Our hostess beamed, till she opened the bag. It was full of lavender.

On another occasion a swarthy Jew came in, evidently drunk, and in high good humour accordingly. He shouted out at the top of his voice:

"I haf elefen fine new corpses in my house. Come and see, come and see. I charge you nothing at all, nothing at all. Entrance all free. Not one little commission, for elefen fine new corpses! Come and see. . . ."

But at this point he was ejected.

Five days, however, is quite long enough to listen to a bombardment, and there is considerable difference between acting as an involuntary target and taking a hand oneself, when the bullets come too close to be pleasant.

It was therefore with unstinted satisfaction that we greeted the cessation of hostilities, and went out, on the sixth day, to view the damage.

Generally speaking, it was not so bad as might

have been expected from the furious cannonade. The quarters about the railway station, San José, and the Central Prison had suffered most. The houses there were peppered with shot and the streets partly torn up. The poorer quarters a little farther out likewise presented an ugly spectacle, and the Infants' Asylum had been struck by several shells, which had mutilated mothers and their newborn children in terrible fashion. About thirty seem to have struck on this one spot. Thus without warning to massacre women and children must be regarded as one of the most abominably brutal violations of humanity, and serves better than anything else to show the character of the man who ordered it.

Just as we reached La Palma, the former garrison was marching out as prisoners of war. All were of marked Indian type, but seemed well nourished and contented. They carried their belongings on their backs, and some had provided themselves with gold-laced general's hats, which they waved gaily to the lookers-on. The whole thing passed off in the most amicable manner. Last of all came the drummer-boys of the band, little fellows in blue tunics with white facings, laughing and chatting as if nothing were amiss. We expected to get a sight of the ex-president also, but he had already been transported early that morning to the Military School, under diplomatic escort.

It was stated that when the old man surrendered, he came out first of all in the usual black frock coat, with a medal for bravery glittering on the lapel, a decoration which he had accorded himself on some occasion or other, but on being relieved of his money, and a silk handkerchief, he was offended, and, going back to his room, reappeared after a while in a tail coat. He considered, perhaps, this costume more suitable for going to prison, and hoped, maybe, to impress some of his conquerors.

The evacuation having been effected, the new troops marched in, and we slipped in with them through the great gateway.

La Palma was a large enclosed area with roads crossing both ways, some disorderly banana plantations, some fine groups of acacias, but otherwise without any real aspect of park or garden arrangement. Tumbled together in a group were some small, insignificant-looking buildings, painted in the crudest colours. Each house appeared to be built for some particular purpose; one contained dining-rooms, another kitchens, a third reception-room, a fourth writing-room, etc. The rooms were small and low, the furniture simple and in bad taste. Little open spaces, built round, blazed in the sun, with wonderful landscapes painted on the walls. At a little distance were rows of straw-thatched huts, the servants' and soldiers' quarters. Here,



PARK OF ARTILLERY, LA PALMA.



A WAR TROPHY.

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the furniture consisted solely of a broad bench serving as dining-table and bed-place combined.

On an open space the entire park of artillery was drawn up ; modern French field-howitzers and seventy-fives with anti-aircraft sights, quick-firing guns and machine-guns in great numbers. The ground was simply covered with empty cartridge cases, showing plainly enough that the pieces had been hard at work. Roughly erected sheds close by still held rows of unopened ammunition boxes. There seems to have been no shortage in this respect.

The whole place was in a state of great activity. Generals coming and going, soldiers searching about in every corner ; soon other elements also slipped in through the gates, and in a little while plundering was in full swing. The officers winked at what was going on, even when the guards on duty took part. The work of destruction was beyond control, and in consequence, the following order was issued :

“ No weapons or fixtures to be taken away ; otherwise gentlemen may help themselves ! ”

Here came an Indian cuddling a bronze figure under each arm, there another with a tinkling chandelier on his back. A third, perhaps, would be carrying a few cigarette cases, while a fourth had arrayed himself in some of Cabrera's old clothes and a decrepit umbrella. The women went more for domestic utensils, such as cups and

saucepans, dishes and tea-pots, or devoted their attention to the larders. There were lively scenes in the wine cellars, as one vintage after another disappeared down the throats of the thirsty soldiery ; in the study, the private correspondence furnished interesting material, which might be of value some day when it came to tracing ancient frauds and putting in claims for enormous sums in damages.

In a few hours' time, every single article of any value had disappeared. Pictures had been cut from their frames, chests broken open, and things too heavy to carry away smashed to pieces. La Palma looked as if a hurricane had swept it from end to end. When we left, some of the more active spirits were already, despite the prohibition, pulling off sheets of roofing and hacking away the window-fasteners.

At the gate stood a general.

" Is that allowed ? "

He shrugged his shoulders.

" The people have suffered, but they have also fought bravely. Now, they take their reward. A cigarette, señor ? "

Just at that moment, however, a soldier came by with a bookcase on his back, and in passing, knocked against the general's outstretched hand, so that the cigarette case fell to the ground—a slip, as it were, 'twixt the smoke and the lip.

" *Caramba !* Get out, you dog ! "



And the guilty plunderer received a kick behind that sent him and his bookcase headlong out on to the road.

Here, an elegant landau was being loaded up with a stack of stolen goods. To it were harnessed a pair of splendid thoroughbred mules in glittering harness, with the presidential emblem bright on their blinkers. One of the collars was upside down, but no one had time to worry about that ; the main thing was to get away as quickly as possible, before some one else had time to steal the treasures, or declare the equipage State property. And off it started with a jerk. But in the meantime, the soldier with the bookcase had managed to pull himself together a bit ; in a trice he had heaved his load on to the back seat, and planted himself, street-arab fashion, on the springs behind. And off went the whole concern in a cloud of dust.

Another interesting spot was the old Spanish fort of Matamoros, situated on a hill just outside the city. Immediately after the white flag had been hoisted, we went out there, and, after considerable discussion, were allowed to enter. The thick walls were built in a star formation, and from every loop-hole, every angle and tower, showed the nose of some species of firearm, from little Colt machine-guns to big 12-cm. Krupp guns dated 1877. All had been used, and still pointed threateningly towards the city, which

was commanded at every point by the guns of the fort. It was noticeable that all the pieces had been placed with that object in view, even before the outbreak, for most of them were built into their places. And on the outward face, i.e. the side to which the guns should properly have been turned, the emplacements were empty. On the wall in the commandant's quarters hung a detailed artillery map of the city, and close by, Cabrera's last order, dated six days previously, for the establishment of an extra telephone line to La Palma. The most striking feature, however, was perhaps the magazines. Six great cellars were piled high with heaps of ammunition, that might have sufficed for a day's barrage along the whole Flanders front. And the powder kegs stood in long rows, exactly as one might imagine them in a well-appointed pirate's hold of the olden days. On the door leading to one of the smaller chambers was a written paper stating that here alone were 3,850,000 rounds of machine-gun ammunition. Evidently, then, the garrison had not been short of ammunition. There was also an abundant supply of flour; meat, however, had run out the day before, when the last mule had been shot.

San José was in similar case, but here, the ammunition had evidently been more recklessly expended, for the ground was so piled with empty cases that it was difficult to walk. It was from

here especially that the avenue in front of Grace's Hotel appeared to have been bombarded ; the distance was only a short kilometre.

Finally, there was a further large supply of arms, untouched, out on one of Cabrera's plantations. There had been hard fighting about the Aurora, the government troops holding out there until the last.

Considering the huge supply of arms and ammunition at the ex-president's disposal, it seemed remarkable that he should have surrendered so soon. But the troops were not to be relied on, deserting in great numbers to the Unionists at every opportunity. Every night several hundred of them were missing. At last, the only way in which the officers could keep them back was by placing themselves behind the lines, and shooting down any who showed the slightest inclination to flight. The commissariat, too, had been so miserably managed, that, despite ample supplies in most places, the men had nevertheless been practically starved. And an empty stomach does not make good soldiers.

The next few days were by no means quiet. Several attempts were made to storm the Military School, where the president was kept in custody. These were suppressed with considerable bloodshed by the Unionist guards themselves, for the new Government was firmly determined to stand by its promises and restore order to the city

without delay. It could not, however, prevent the excited mob from lynching twelve Cabrerists with clubs and machetes on the grand plaza, still less occasional shooting in the streets at night. It was also powerless when a great part of the railway station was burned down, destroying a considerable amount of rolling stock and some 650,000 litres of fuel oil. Thick, suffocating clouds of smoke poured out from the site of the conflagration and spread over the city, literally obscuring the sun ; darkness set in several hours earlier than usual.

Otherwise, the new leaders showed themselves well able to deal with the situation. As soon as the thirst for vengeance had been satisfied out at La Palma, plundering ceased entirely. The outposts at street corners were at once withdrawn, the troops were relieved in succession, without disorder, and drafted back to their districts. There was some little anxiety lest the soldiery, having tasted blood, should get out of hand and establish a reign of terror ; the wise policy and resolute action of the Government, however, averted the threatened peril.

Three days later, the city had already regained its normal appearance, and a sigh of relief went through the community as life gradually returned to its former state. Strangely enough, there was no festive celebration of the victory. People had other things to think about, and too many were

in mourning for those who had fallen. The losses incurred might amount to some 800 killed and a couple of thousand wounded.

In the villages, the revolution passed off with less bloodshed. Only a few places, such as Quetzaltenango and Zacapa, offered any considerable resistance; otherwise, the entire country sided with Herrera and his party.

Our principal anxiety now was, how we were to proceed on our journey. The boat with our empty berths for Costa Rica had sailed long since. No one knew when the next sailing would be, nor was it possible to say how long before the railways would be clear again between the capital and its port on the Pacific side, San Jose. The railroad telegraph was out of order, and the metals were said to be up in several places. Furthermore, there was a scarcity of fuel after the conflagration. With praiseworthy energy, however, the authorities set about getting the normal traffic re-established, and in a short time communication was opened up once more with the west, and towards the Mexican frontier. The arrivals and departures of the Pacific boats, however, were still uncertain.

Day followed day, and soon we were obliged to relinquish the idea of Costa Rica altogether, the more so since we had been delayed by malaria before arriving at Guatemala City. It was annoying, for we had obtained information of several places of interest in the south of the Republic, as

also of some collections of antiques, which it might be worth while to acquire if possible. We had made our plans, however, without consulting Cabrerists or Unionists, and now it was too late. The rain might set in at any minute now, and it was best to get home before that, for out-door work and tropic downpours go ill together.

After some further waiting, we decided to take the first boat that came along for Panama. Before doing so, however, we would visit the relics at St. Lucia, and also the ancient hill city of Quetzaltenango ; then, when this was done, we could take up our quarters in San Jose and wait for a sailing to the southward.

First of all, however, we felt it our duty to seek a private audience of the new President.

Don Carlos Herrera received us in the most amiable manner. He is a man in the prime of life, dark, and of an old and distinguished Spanish family, settled in the country as far back as the seventeenth century. His brown eyes look out piercingly but kindly from an intelligent face. In contrast to his predecessor, he is a man of education and culture, well-read, and travelled, with good traditions and upbringing at his back. A man of business by profession, he has won a good name for himself throughout the Republic for uprightness and incorruptibility. His sons were educated in England and France, and he himself speaks both these languages.

We offered our congratulations on his success, and begged him to accept, as a token of our esteem for the work of the Unionists in the cause of liberty, a sum of money to be distributed among the women and children innocently suffering as a result of the revolution.

"Yes," he said, "it seems strange in a way to me to be sitting here—and strictly speaking, against my will. I have always held aloof from politics, as a thing I did not understand. But since the party insisted on having me, I gave way at last, with the express reservation that I should only remain in office until a new election could be brought about. That should be some time in August, and until then I shall have to carry on the work.<sup>1</sup> I can assure you it is far from pleasant. There is an enormous burden of work ahead of us, for there is much that is bad to be cleared away after the old regime. But Guatemala is too fine and rich a country to lie long in neglect. The world of to-day calls for altogether different activity on the part of a country and its people. Our endeavour will be to place the Republic on a level with other free nations of the civilised world ; only thus can we hope to win the respect of other peoples. The world has shrugged its shoulders at Guatemala long enough. In future, our way

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<sup>1</sup> According to latest information, Carlos Herrera has accepted re-election, and is at present constitutional President of the Republic.

must lie through freedom within the law to brighter days."

It was easy to see that it was a patriot who spoke thus, and a man who fully realised the seriousness of the new situation. We shook hands with him, and wished him all possible success in his endeavours. It will be for posterity to judge whether the high hopes centred upon Herrera and his party were fulfilled.

Thus, then, we left Guatemala City, the scene of so many unexpected happenings.

The train was crammed to its utmost with soldiers returning home, but thanks to the courtesy of the new Government—which, of course, would not be outdone by its predecessors—our old wagon from Quirigua was coupled on at the last moment. It had been under fire, and was now a relic of war. Not a window was left whole, and a cooling draught came in through numerous shot-holes in the sides and roof. We picked out the sharpest and worst of the shell splinters from the seats, and made ourselves as comfortable as could be.

It was downhill nearly all the way. After a few hours, we passed the beautiful lake of Amatitlan, surrounded by high mountains, and with a range of hot springs along the shore. The surface of the water lay like a sheet of opal, mirroring the volcanic peaks and the drifting clouds above. The scene was one of impressive,



almost Olympian calm. But it is said that the lake is a treacherous one, with powerful whirlpools that will drag down a fisherman and his canoe if he be not on his guard.

Between Palin and Esquintla, the train rushes down something like a thousand metres in half an hour, after which one finds oneself again in the warm tropical climate. Huge forests, alternating with coffee, sugar and rubber plantations, stretch away as far as the eye can see. Or one looks out over wide-spreading pasture lands, with the thick-leaved *ceibas* left standing from the time the ground was cleared. The *ceiba* is the sacred, storied tree of the Indians, which spreads its oak-like crown in lordly solitude high over the surrounding plain. The country is wonderfully rich, but only an inconsiderable area is under cultivation.

At Pantaleone, our party divided, two remaining there to visit the newly discovered relics at Sta. Lucia, the others, including the writer, going on to the little city of Retalhuleu, and thence by motor to Quetzaltenango.

After a night at a third-rate hotel, where the stables adjoined the guest-rooms, so that anyone opening the wrong door might run up against the nose of a snorting beast, we set off next morning on a break-neck motor journey up the hills.

The road here was if possible worse than on the way to Antigua, but by way of compensation,

the scenery was finer. We made an ascent of 2,500 metres in five hours, and the higher we got, the wilder grew the landscape. On the one side lay the mighty mass of Sta. Maria, a volcano which about this time amused itself with a so-called dry eruption, sending out no lava, but at least with such emphatic activity that the whole of the western slope went crashing down into the valley, and the summit shifted some hundreds of metres. On the other hand was the gigantic outline of Sunil—one of the highest peaks in the country—with black veils of cloud about its brow. On every side sharp mountain ridges showed in the distance. The road ran past perpendicular precipices and over deep ravines, where waterfalls poured from shelf to shelf; here and there a hot spring bubbled up from the ground, or the steam rose like a plume from some cleft in the rock. The Indians call these places the lungs of the volcanoes. Along the valleys were set several picturesque little villages. And suddenly, on a high peak of rock, a church would show up, gleaming like a white torch in the sunlight, only to be hidden next minute by a passing mass of cloud. The tropical forest was long since left behind, and the vegetation here consisting of a few scanty groups of fir and prickly cactus, the red flowers of the latter glowing like drops of blood in the parched brown of the surroundings. The air grew colder and more

rarefied—we could feel that we were high up among the clouds.

The little city of Quetzantenango lies in an old volcanic crater. It looks very much like any other Spanish city, with an open plaza in the centre and narrow crooked streets all round. When you have seen one, you have seen them all. But the mountain tract here is considered one of the finest in the whole Republic, and is especially famous for its hot baths.

San Cristobal and Almolonga especially, are largely patronised by invalids, who come to seek a cure in the sulphurous waters. But one must not expect, from this, to find anything like an organised health resort. The baths consist merely of big masonry tanks in the open, where men, women and children bathe with the greatest freedom and unity. And having washed their bodies, it is then the turn of their clothes, all in the same water. The mixture, however, does not seem to trouble the patients in the least, for they splash about delightedly from morning to night, the longer the better. They do not consult any medical man; here on the mountains, where people still hold by ancient ways and customs, they go to a wizard. Each tribe, distinguished from the rest by speech and dress, has at least four of these aged wiseacres. By means of charm and spell they drive out all manner of evil spirits, which are supposed to be the cause of all

complaints, and when these methods do not avail, the patient is sent to the baths, to drown the devils within. These wizards also exercise some sort of authority, acting as headmen of their villages, and the Indians, with their inherent superstition, never venture to oppose them. They keep a careful watch over the mineral treasures of the mountains. It is known, for instance, that there are rich quicksilver deposits, but if any white man attempts to start prospecting, the wizard sends for his satellites, and the expedition never returns. Many things may happen among these mountain ravines which are never brought to light.

Not far from San Cristobal lies Salcaja. If the former may rightly be counted among the beneficent spots of the earth, the latter must certainly be placed in an opposite category. For here is produced the *aguardiente* of the province, made partly from sugar-cane, partly from corn and maize, which are grown over wide areas in the plateaux around. It is reckoned the finest product in the country, of its sort, on account of a small stream with peculiarly muddy water, which flows right past the distillery, and is utilised in the manufacture. And to judge by results, the strength and body of the spirit leave nothing to be desired. On the way to the town one may meet hosts of thirsty natives, but when they set out on the homeward journey, their legs



IDOL'S HEAD, SANTA LUCIA.



QUETZALTENANGO.

*(After Maudslay.)*

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will rarely carry them beyond the nearest ditch. Fierce brawls and riotous scenes are so common that a special guard of picked soldiers is always at hand to deal with the worst of the culprits. And behind all this scandalous business, stood, in former days, the Government, rubbing its hands in delight when the proceeds of the distilleries, as they increased, augmented at the same time the bulk of notes in its own pocket.

Add, in conclusion, that the district produces genuine, thick home-woven Indian carpets of weird design, and in soft colours—and little more need be said of Quetzaltenango.

Being without information as to our vessel, and fearing lest it should arrive and leave again without us, we restricted our stay in the mountains to a couple of days. But the night between will be long remembered, for the cold, despite half a dozen thick hotel rugs, was worse than on a winter morning at Kiruna.

And so we trundled home again, the same wild road we had come. And on the following evening the whole party was once more assembled at San Jose.

This little place forms, with Champerico, the port of entry into Guatemala from the Pacific, whence one might expect to find it a flourishing city. This, however, is by no means the case. A few tumbledown shanties, a row of palm-covered huts and a sooty railway station—that is

all. The waves break in a drowsy monotone on a desolate, sun-scorched sandy beach, day and night, day and night without a pause. Harbour there is none, the vessels anchoring in the open roads, exposed to every wind. But for the work of loading and discharging, a long iron pier has been built straight out into the sea, and this is the pride of the town. Between its rough pillars, the water breaks in a froth of white, and every storm shakes the whole erection like a leaf. Up to now, however, it has stood its ground. It affords no shelter whatsoever, still less protection from the waves; small boats and lighters hook on as best they can along the sides, riding now high on a wave-crest, now deep in a hollow. Passengers and goods alike are hoisted up in huge baskets. It is at times a very risky business to embark, and more than one traveller has broken arm or leg in the attempt. For the sea is violently strong here and seems to break all ways at once.

There was no hotel in the place, but a kindly American Consul took pity on us, and put us up at his bungalow on the very edge of the beach. The heat was oppressive, but there was always a fresh breeze in one corner of the veranda. Here we sat during the day, gazing impatiently for a steamer that it seemed would never come, and hushed to sleep at night by the ever-heaving swell of the blue sea, so heavy as at times to shake the whole house.



Then at last one afternoon a green-painted hull showed up on the horizon. Our waiting was at an end. And, when, after three days loading and discharging, the American steamer *San Juan* at last hove up her anchor, we stood, all four of us, by the rail and watched the sun-parched shore of Guatemala gradually melt and fade into the far blue.

## HOMeward BOUND

THERE is a considerable difference between Indian towns in Guatemala and North American ideas of life generally. Although both countries are Republics, the tone and principle of the former are highly conservative, the latter country, on the other hand, taking a pride in being democratic even over the smallest trifles. And by trifles may here be understood the thousand little matters that make life on a passenger boat a pleasure or the reverse, according as they are dealt with. When every one is free to do exactly as he pleases, one might think life would be one of pure delight, and the place a paradise.

But that is hardly so after all.

For instance, when a young and impertinent commercial traveller gets his gramophone to work at six precisely every morning outside one's cabin door, or an otherwise charming girl takes it into her head to sing "Home, sweet Home" twenty times a day, without really getting hold of the tune till after the twenty-first, the effect is hardly what one might call restful, at any rate in the morning. When one's coffee cup is almost torn from one's lips at the end of dinner, and the

guests politely but firmly requested to leave, as the table is wanted for the coloured waiters' supper—well, no doubt they have every right to do so, but the arrangement is hardly calculated to improve the general comfort. And further, when the spoon on one's tea-tray is not allowed to remain there more than five minutes at the outside, being then removed by the waiter with the explanation that the guests might otherwise be tempted to steal, this is not exactly conducive to reciprocal confidence. And when, finally, after the disillusion of the dining-room and the saloon, one moves up to the promenade deck, thinking to drop down easily into the deck chair one has paid for and labelled with one's name, only to find the seat occupied by a gentleman, a lady, and some noisy children with their stacks of books and toys; then, one can only stand expectantly leaning against the rail, and wonder how far individual freedom really can be extended without becoming a nuisance.

But one grows used to most things, even to finding a strange parrot on one's pillow, the bird having escaped from its owner and been shut up hurriedly in the first cabin that came handy by an orderly member of the crew. One submits patiently at first to having people tread on one's toes; later on, one adopts the principle actively oneself. It simply doesn't pay to be considerate and solicitous for the comfort of others, when

nobody else on board does the like. An elbow in the ribs, or a fist hard on the table is a swifter and surer means of getting what one wants. And after a while one comes to realise that American ideas of comfort are essentially different from those of the Swedes or the English. Out there, even the most natural functions of life are treated democratically, without making them simpler, more convenient or less inevitable. This, at least, was the case on the *San Juan*.

The old hulk—she was thirty-two years old—carried a very mixed party on board, including both white and coloured passengers. The latter consisted of fugitives from the revolution in Guatemala, and there seemed to be quite a number of doubtful characters among them. The name of Cabrera occurred several times on the passenger list, for though the President was officially unmarried, he had not thought it beneath him to leave a numerous progeny; this goes with the office in Central America.

Among the palefaces may be specially mentioned: a peevish old American colonel and his sister, formerly resident in the Philippines, now retired; travelling for the sake of travel. The corpulent wife of a multi-millionaire and her grown-up daughter from San Francisco, on the same errand. Mr. and Mrs. Waterman, going to take over the American Consulate at Corinto. An ex-missionary, now Methodist preacher and

films expert, seeking to demonstrate the progress of Christianity among the Chiriqui Indians by means of the screen. A shaky geologist of doubtful nationality, who maintained that gold was to be picked up like buttercups in Honduras. A German planter with wife and child and a half tame monkey ; monkey and child about equally incorrigible. The traditional English Miss with prominent teeth and Dickens under her arm. The no less traditional loving couple, the weaker half adorned as to the head with hair of a beautiful brick-red hue, albeit the colour looked as though it might come out in the wash. And thereto a whole host of other fellow-creatures, mostly business men and young Americans with square shoulders and hair down over their eyes. If one wished to give a general description of the younger generation of Yankees at the present time, with due politeness but without exaggeration, it would be : energy, power of work, sincerity, freedom : or, leaving politeness out of the question, *naïveté*, an outward veneer of ordinary culture, plus chewing gum, and gramophone.

The Pacific was true to its name ; from morning till night the surface of the water lay smooth as a silver dish, the long swell drawing hardly perceptible grooves across. The heat, however, was oppressive, most like that of a hot-house on a summer's day.

One fine afternoon, the *San Juan* anchored in the roads of Acajutla. We were in the territorial waters of Salvador, and as there was a railway up to the capital, we decided to run up there while the vessel was taking in coffee, sugar and hides ; we could then pick up the boat again at La Libertad. The coast between these two places is called Costa del Balsamo, on account of the numerous balsam trees growing there. The raw material is obtained in much the same way as rubber, but when it arrives in Europe, the name has been changed to Peruvian Balsam, though that country does not produce the article at all. The name dates back to early days when Salvador was obliged to ship certain products to the Spanish merchants of Callao, who in their turn transported them across country and thence home.

In the early morning hours of the following day, a dusty and shaky train carried us up to San Salvador. For some reason or other, the train was so packed that it was preferable to sit on the footboards at the end. And from this position, one had an excellent view of the landscape.

The general appearance was much the same as in Guatemala ; first thick jungle, broken here and there by plantations, then scantier vegetation on a parched plateau. Just before the line rounds the volcano of San Salvador, a broad lava belt

is passed, the result of an eruption from one of the side craters two years ago. Twelve kilometres long, three broad, and some twenty metres in depth, it lies like a huge, rugged serpent across the country, and it is said that the lower portion is still glowing hot. The line runs straight across it now, however, for the mass has ceased to move.

How our arrival had been reported in the city we never quite made out. But the fact remains that when we stepped out of the train, dusty, sweaty and thirsty, dressed only in khaki and a light shirt, with a packet containing a toothbrush under our arm, far from presentable, and very much in doubt as to where to go next, up rushed a crowd of ministers in frock coats and top hats, followed by sabre-rattling military men, who, with repeated bows, begged us to consider the place as our own, and placed the entire resources of the country unreservedly at our disposal. An elegant and delicately perfumed Secretary of State conveyed President Menendez' greetings, and the presidential invitation to a glass of champagne as soon as possible.

Tableau.

A pretty situation, without so much as a clean handkerchief between us !

" But how on earth did you—— ? "

" Ah, *señores*," was the answer, " everything is known here, even to the fact that *el príncipe* was the leading spirit of the revolution against

Cabrera and shot down sixty-seven of the ruffians with his own hand. A good deed, and worthy of all appreciation in Salvador."

*Santa Simplicidad*—this was a nice one!

"But if that were, to say the least, exaggeration?"

"It said so in the papers, señor, so it must be true."

And we had the utmost difficulty in convincing them to the contrary. But as for ruffians, we ourselves felt ruffianly enough in this assembly of irreproachable elegance.

After half an hour's respite generously accorded by our hosts, that we might at least get a wash and brush up at the hotel, we made our way to the President accordingly.

Outside the gateway stood a few generals stiffly at attention after the manner of tin soldiers, closely observing our stained and crumpled khaki, and doubtless finding our appearance little in accord with the solemnity of the occasion. After a simultaneous right turn, they followed in our wake to the door of the reception-room, where etiquette sternly forbade all further progress, and a moment later we stood face to face with the supreme authority of the Republic.

A slender, elegant, middle-aged man, with large spectacles, behind which shone a keen, watchful glance, shook hands with us. Around us, the assembled government of the country—a collection of youths, with here and there a white-



haired senior in the ranks—murmured something or other, and after having heard at least a score of incomprehensible names, we found ourselves seated on a gilded sofa, trying our best to look at our ease. The Minister for Foreign Affairs gave a slight cough. Thereafter silence as of the dead. A sparrow in an ostrich's cage could hardly have felt more utterly lost than the alleged revolutionary from Guatemala.

But if the reception appeared stiff and ceremonial at first, a very different atmosphere now followed. The click of a cigarette-case broke the ice, and formality gave way at once to the liveliness of the southern temperament, and the conversation soon went fluently. Once begun, it was difficult to stop at all, for in Salvador, it seems, they talk nineteen to the dozen without winking.

Señor Georg Menendez proved to be a man of importance. Educated in Switzerland, he spoke both French and English fluently, was well acquainted with affairs in Europe, keen on everything English, and full of modern ideas. His whole manner revealed the man of education and thoughtful mind, using his intelligence to the acquirement of further knowledge, and taking a broad view of life. He followed the events of the day with watchful interest, and was thoroughly alive to the needs of the time. Like Carlos Herrera, he was a true patriot, toiling

ungrudgingly for the good of his country from early morning till late at night.

Without further parley, he entered at once upon the discussion of questions of the day, managing, with the ease of a man of the world, to turn the conversation into channels where his interest lay. And it was not long before we were deep in social problems and politics.

"And do you expect a revolution in Sweden?"

The question was somewhat unexpected.

"Well, no, not just at the moment, perhaps. We've a Socialist Government, you see . . ."

"Ah, of course . . . yes. In this country they're all Socialists, and consequently there's nothing to revolt for. But those extremist fellows. . . . Only a little while back there was a party of them wanting to make speeches on the plaza. But I got them all stowed away on a boat going to Guatamela, and since then we've had no more of them. Seems to me you might do the same."

Thus simply are social problems dealt with in Salvador!

"Do you ever long to go back to Europe, where you spent your early years? To travel and see the world again after the changes of the past few years?"

"Yes, indeed. If I get out of this business alive I'm going over again. Four years the job's supposed to last, and I've another two and a half years to run. But a great deal can happen

in that time. . . . A Central American Republic isn't always as calm as a duckpond."

And with our recent impressions from a neighbouring Republic freshly in mind, we could heartily agree.

After the obligatory glass of champagne, and with an ashtray full of cigarette ends between us, the long conversation, touching on every imaginable subject from Napoleon to the effect of malaria bacilli on the brain cells, came to an end at last, leaving us with the impression of a man standing far above the average level, and head and shoulders above any other we had met on our journey.

"I'll come round early to-morrow morning," were his last words, "and call for you at the hotel. Then we can have a look at the city together."

The ministers bowed, the Secretary of State breathed otto of roses, the generals saluted, the sentries shouldered arms, and the street curs barked. Then, with a noise suggestive of whooping cough, the presidential car got under way, and carried us through the darkening streets of Salvador to the comfortable beds and super-star cockroaches of the Nuevo Mondo.

Next morning, about sunrise, Señor Menendez arrived, as he had said, in the hoarse-throated car. Another vehicle full of generals followed faithfully behind us, like a well-trained police dog. And off we went. Up one street and down another,

visiting well-equipped hospitals and modern school buildings, Government offices, post offices and Parliament buildings, churches, prisons and up-to-date clubs. The President seemed equally at home everywhere, and equally popular, every one appearing pleased to see him. He would pull up in the middle of the street to wave to some acquaintance, ask after the coffee prospects, or how the children were getting on at school. Exalted ministers and simple workmen were treated in the same kind, genial and considerate fashion, with an encouraging word or a friendly pat on the back. Here was a man, the true father of his country, who knew every one, and who, despite his high position, lived the life of his people, and knew how to talk with them as a fellow creature.

What a difference from Guatemala !

Wherever we went we found order, industry, progress, development—in a word, the precise opposite of the neighbouring country to the northward.

In the Government offices the officials worked like busy bees. In the schools the children were carefully educated by competent teachers, and after passing a final examination a number of scholars were sent to Europe—out of funds provided by the State—to the best technical schools or universities to complete their education. The administration of justice was free from corruption,

and in the gaols, prisoners were treated justly but humanely. The army was well equipped, the soldiers regularly paid, and had no need to go about begging. Shoes even formed part of the uniform. Industries flourished and commerce was carried on according to modern ideas.

The little Republic, smallest but by no means least among its neighbours, really presented a surprisingly favourable impression. Somewhat smaller than the province of Värmland in extent, it has nevertheless a population of nearly a million, and is considered the most civilised and best governed in the whole of Central America. The land is rich, and its resources are well looked after. Sugar, coffee, tobacco, cotton, fruit, vegetables and maize are the principal products. There is gold in the rivers, and other precious metals are found in the mountains.

Salvador, the capital, lies on a fertile plateau quite close to the foot of the volcano of the same name. There is great activity in the streets, and the little tramcars, drawn by mules, swing with a rattle round the corners, to set off at a clattering trot along the *avenida*. The houses look clean and well-built ; the gardens are ablaze with fine flowers. Everywhere one sees new buildings under erection, and old ones under repair. For the city lies on a volcanic site, and now and again a slight shock upsets the houses ; the place is also called by the Indians by the

characteristic name of "Hammock Valley" from the tendency of the ground to rock.

In 1854, 1873, 1918 and 1919 Salvador was visited by earthquakes, which more or less demolished great parts of the city. But each time the inhabitants set to work courageously to rebuild what had been destroyed. This constant war between humanity and the powers of nature led to a comprehensive study of the question of building materials. Every imaginable type of house construction has been tried, from wood and clay to reinforced concrete or thin armour plate. The experiments have now stopped at iron, or cemented steel tubes, as being best calculated to resist a rough sea on land.

As regards the population, this is here, as in Guatemala, a mixture of Creoles, Indians, and also negroes in every possible combination. Pure-blooded *mozos* are seldom found, and the picturesque coloured costumes are largely replaced by dress of the well-known European pattern—highly respectable, no doubt, but far more commonplace-looking than the richly hued *huipilis* that seemed fashioned solely in order to fit in with a sunny landscape and harmonise with a copper-coloured skin.

All, however, look well contented; one sees none but happy faces in the streets, and all speak loudly of comfort and pleasure after the day's work is done.

With the best of memories and impressions from the progressive little Republic, we drove off the same afternoon to the coast, along a sinuous motor road, hard and level as a floor. At La Libertad the Trouville of Salvador, lay our vessel, loading sugar, and when the dusk drew its veil over Rada de Tepeagua, the *San Juan* was once more heading south.

It was a wonderfully beautiful night that followed.

There was a new moon, and the darkness brooded silently, only the stars twinkling through a thin film of watery mist. Then suddenly it seemed as if a flash of lightning shot through the water. Faintly at first, as if hesitating, then again, and yet again, clearer now and more pronounced. And soon the whole surface was alight with a silvery-violet sheen, with the crests of the waves gleaming one behind the other. A thousand sparks shone out and faded, to reappear again elsewhere. It was as if the vessel were cutting her way through a mass of molten metal, and the phosphorescence was so strong that terrified fish dashed through the water in flight, drawing sharp lines to mark their way. Now and again a shoal would leap right out of the water, splashing the silver about like handfuls of coin, and presenting at a distance exactly the effect of breakers. So much so, indeed, that the engines were slowed down and the soundings taken, for

it really looked as if the water were breaking on a reef ahead. The lead, however, showed a hundred metres, and the reckoning ten miles from the land, so it was merely an effect of the phosphorescence. The incident, however, was enough to make several of the passengers swear the vessel had touched ground; they came on deck with anxious faces and took up their positions near the lifeboats, to see if they were ready to lower away.

The phenomenon lasted only a little while, but for the time its power and intensity were of a degree unusual even in these waters, which are renowned for almost fabulous displays of the sort. Soon the Pacific lay once more calm and dark, with only a faint silvery glitter now and again in the thresh of our propeller. And over the horizon hung the pale sickle of the new moon, sharp and curved like the bent bow of Montezuma.

Day followed day, and the days grew to weeks.

We were travelling at no great speed, but it made the voyage last all the longer. Spanish Honduras, Nicaragua and Costa Rica, all have their little ports which a Pacific steamer must find time to call at and devote some days to. Now they lie amid a belt of tropical volcanic islands, as is the case with Amapala in Fonseca Bay, now on the open coast, as with San Juan del Sur in Nicaragua, the terminal point of the projected canal through the lake of that name. At



every stopping place we took in hides, coffee and sugar, or lowered bunches of hard cocobola trunks into the hold. This timber is so heavy that the winch could only take two or three at a time. Soon the available cargo space below was full up, and the decks had to be taken into requisition ; the *San Juan's* cargo was worth millions.

At last one morning the tall island of Taboga came in sight, and a few hours later we lay in Panama Roads. From there to the Canal Harbour itself, however, proved a difficult stage to traverse, for the American authorities are particular even in trifles. With characteristic thoroughness they inquire into the most intimate family history of every foreigner before allowing him to land, and the highly personal questions he is called upon to answer, on a yard-long form, are hardly remarkable for delicacy of feeling.

"Are you married? Are you divorced? How many children have you? Are they all legitimate? How long have you been in prison? From what country were you last deported? Are you a polygamist? Do you contemplate violent opposition to the existing government? etc."

When these questions, and a thousand others, have been answered according to one's more or less accommodating conscience, the health authorities take up the game. The passengers are driven like a herd of cattle down into the

dining saloon and called over by name, to make sure that none are in hiding. Then comes a doctor with two assistants, each carrying a glass bowl with clean cotton wool at the bottom and some fifty clinical thermometers sticking up like the quills of a porcupine. And soon each individual is sitting sucking at his or her thermometer as if it were a sugarstick, while the doctor goes round feeling pulses. Nervous ladies send their temperatures up to fever height out of sheer anxiety and effort to seem even healthier than they are already, and the business has to be repeated over and over again. And, by way of conclusion, one is required to declare on one's honour that one's state of health is satisfactory, and that one is not carrying a supply of yellow fever bacilli in a little box.

After this, one is put into quarantine for a number of days, according to the time which has elapsed since the vessel last quitted an infected port, and then, this period of purgatory over, permission is at last given to enter the Canal zone.

We got off comparatively easily, inasmuch as we were allowed to pass the period of quarantine on board instead of on shore, and the vessel was allowed to lie at moorings in the inner harbour till morning. In between rows of forts, oil tanks, towering cranes and huge quays the *San Juan* steered slowly towards the mouth; then, after

a long half-day's trying ordeal for both officers and passengers, the boat was swallowed up by the mighty water-serpent that is called the Panama Canal.

Volumes have been written about this gigantic work, which unites two oceans and cuts through the isthmus between two continents. Of the earliest origin of the idea as far back as the sixteenth century, when, however, the project was forbidden by Philip II of Spain as against the divine ordinance. Of how Nelson, as a young man, after his visit to Nicaragua in 1780, tried to interest his countrymen in the matter, and how the great French Canal Company, forty years back, under the leadership of de Lesseps, finally set to work on the cut, sacrificing thousands of lives and hundreds of millions of francs only to come to a terrible financial debacle nine years later, leaving behind a rudimentary piece of work and all the bitterness of failure. And of how, in the end, American initiative succeeded in carrying out the great undertaking in 1904-1915, with the aid of the most complete technical equipment of modern times, digging out, incidentally, a mass of earth equivalent to sixty-three times the bulk of the Pyramid of Cheops, or, say, if placed on the Kungsträdgård at Stockholm, reaching a whole Swedish mile up into the air.

To enter here upon a description of the canal itself would, therefore, be merely to repeat what

has been done by others already. It must suffice to remind the reader that the length is 66 kilometres from coast to coast, the depth sufficient for the biggest vessel afloat, the number of locks twelve (six pairs), and their length 300 metres.

For the sake of this great hydra, everything else has been resolutely thrust aside. Mountains have been pierced, rivers dammed, great inland lakes formed, covering with their waters deserted towns and mouldering forests. The canal must go through, and through it came at last, though the earth raged and the waters rose in flood; the greater the obstacles encountered, the greater the honour of overcoming them. And now the canal is there, finished, smooth, a monument of the engineering science of the twentieth century, a way of communication for the giants of the ocean, and a link between the various peoples of the world.

Even now, it is true, troublesome landslides still occur, especially in the Culebra Cut, where, a couple of years ago, the masses of earth filled up the channel, so that one could walk dryshod from bank to bank. Generally speaking, however, the work is complete, and the manifold complicated machinery works with due precision. Three thousand whites and seven thousand blacks guard the hydra and its bed; a whole Armada of motor boats, dredgers and cranes are constantly in readiness to act in case a new combat should

be needed with crumbling mountain ridges or bursting dams. But under shelter of the heavy guns of the forts, guided by Swedish Aga lights, and with a complicated protective system of signal-stations, ducd'albas, electric locomotives and heavy barrier chains, traffic can still proceed with the greatest security. Since the ground has been cleared, and marshes drained or drenched with petroleum to kill off the mosquitoes, sanitary conditions have so improved that the Canal zone, from having been a veritable death-trap, is now considered one of the healthiest sites in the whole of Central America.

It may be of interest for our countrymen to note that the Harbourmaster at Panama is a Swede, by name Karl Swensson. It is no light task to rule more or less despotically over harbour, roads, and the half of the Canal with all its nautical means of communication, but a post demanding skill and power of work. In this respect, Charlie Swensson, as he is called, may serve as an example for many others. He is a further evidence of the fact that a good Swede will make his way anywhere between the poles and the equator.

As regards the Republic of Panama itself, through which the American Canal Zone, 16 kilometres wide, is drawn, it is a state of recent formation, its origin being probably unique. For centuries past, canals have been made for the sake of the countries through which they run ;

here, however, we have a country brought into existence for the sake of a canal. Until 1903, the territory belonged to Colombia, but when the inhabitants found that the politics of the mother country would not satisfy their demands for a waterway from coast to coast, they revolted, and formed their own republic, which, fourteen days later, offered the American Government what is now the Canal area for a sum of ten million dollars, and an annual payment, after the first nine years, of 250,000 dollars for all time.

The capital consists really of two cities ; Panama, the old Spanish settlement, with picturesque forts, crooked streets, and a *plaza* resounding with noisy music ; and Balboa or Ancon on the hills opposite, situate within the Canal zone, and occupied chiefly by American officials.

Here, asphalted roads wind in and out between tall palms and leafy gardens, where bungalows with their surrounding verandas lie bedded in cool shade, while the city below is alive with a cosmopolitan crowd from all the corners of the earth. Order and neatness reign, however, for the systematic methods of America have reached here as well.

Nevertheless, there is an infinite difference between the two places. Ancon follows the laws of the mother country in regard to "dryness," whereas in Panama, the completest freedom exists. And the two cities being built in one,

we find the peculiar fact that on one side of the street, one may drink whisky at one's ease under the paternal rule of a republican government, while on the other, the whisky-drinker would be promptly collared by the representatives of an equally republican but less kindly government, and subjected to arrest, plus a fine of a thousand dollars and a year's leisure to philosophise over the question in some prison. To avoid confusion, a white line has been drawn through the paving to mark the boundary between these two fundamentally opposite principles ; not a few would seem to have stumbled over that same line.

Opinions may differ as to the justifiability of total prohibition. One thing, however, is certain ; were it not for Panama, half the officials in the Canal service would long since have left Ancon. For a tropical thirst is not to be assuaged by iced water and syrups alone.

On our arrival, we were met with an unpleasant piece of news. We had telegraphed from Guatemala ordering berths for Europe, but in the heat of the revolution, the message appeared to have been lost on the way. Consequently, we found ourselves now in an awkward fix. The boats were full up months ahead, and at all the offices were long waiting lists of people anxious to take over any berths which might chance to be given up by some kind persons changing their minds or departing this life meantime. The passenger traffic was

abnormally heavy just now, and the available tonnage was far from sufficient to meet requirements. The agent of the Johnson Line could not promise us a boat for the next six weeks, and another Swedish vessel expected in was destined for Alexandria. Other tramp steamer lines proved hopeless, though at least a dozen boats passed every day in both directions. Either there was no passenger accommodation at all, or it was booked up. It looked as if we might have to wait months before getting home, and the rains had already set in; every afternoon the gates of heaven were opened wide and buckets of water flung down over a parched earth. So regularly did these downpours occur that one might safely set one's watch at five minutes past two on the appearance of the first few drops.

We soon learned to know the little city of Panama inside and out. But the rivers and the gulf outside were full of fish; we took to fishing, therefore, and found it an excellent diversion when time hung heavy on our hands, spending many an hour with reel and line on the Chagres river or out among the islands in the wide gulf, for there was good sport to be had and plenty of it.

The tarpon is found chiefly in rivers. It is a fish of the herring family, very powerful, and a most sporting fish to fight. Once struck, it puts up a grand battle at once, leaping a yard out of



the water, or standing on its tail and shaking its head furiously in its efforts to get rid of the hook, which also happens nine times out of ten. The tenth, however, it may hold, and then follows an hour of paying out and winding in, before the fish is sufficiently played out to be landed. The largest specimens weigh up to 75 kilos ; no light weight to tackle with rod and line.

Out among the islands, on the other hand, sport is mostly confined to amber-jacks and red snappers. The former is a long, lithe fish, something like a mackerel ; the latter a broad, stumpy fellow, florid in hue, rather suggesting a cross between perch and bream. They vary in weight from 5 to 100 kilos ; and both are excellent eating.

The best fishing grounds are found more especially round the archipelago of Pearl Islands. On a good day, one may get a catch of half a ton of fish in a few hours during the morning, from small mackerel to big sharks. But this means fish biting freely, and the sport at last becomes sheer manual labour. A 50-kilo snapper, for instance, when struck, makes straight for the bottom and does not stop till the line is nearly off the reel. And there he will stay sulking a while, till one has worried him enough to get him half-way up. Then he starts off afresh, running out the line so fast as almost to set the reel on fire. And so he goes on, time after time, until either he or the angler is weary. Once he is landed,

however, there is a certain satisfaction in contemplating the red glittering giant, occupying as he does most of the seating space in a small motor boat.

Under an overhanging rocky island, called "the drowned ape," sharks were so plentiful that if a medium-sized mackerel took the bait, one might be sure of losing half of him before getting him in; the other half would meantime have disappeared into the jaws of some shark. It is rarely, however, that the bloodthirsty beasts themselves are caught on the hook.

At last one day, returning home from one of these fishing expeditions, we found a long-awaited message in the post box, to the effect that two berths had fallen vacant on a steamer leaving the following morning for Jamaica, and possibly calling at New York. We had never contemplated going round that way, but there was nothing to be done now but accept it thankfully, and set to work packing at once, in the hope that we might somehow manage to get across the rest of the Atlantic in the not too distant future.

Olsson and Sandeberg had left Panama already, on the day the *San Juan* finished her quarantine, and had gone on to the States in the mate's cabin on a crowded passenger boat; they had important business in New York. It was thus only Sjögren and the author who set out hurriedly at daybreak and took the first car available to Colon.

We were hurried at a furious pace over the well-built iron road, that must have cost about a life per running yard to construct in the days when fever was at its worst. And we got in just in time to get on board the *Santa Marta* ; an hour later, we were well out in the Caribbean, the water spreading like an unbroken mirror all around.

And this time, Central America faded once and for all below the horizon. But we took with us the memory of a little world in itself, a corner of the earth which, despite its situation between two great continents, had been left aside in the march of progress. Possibly it is just this fact that makes one feel a certain sympathy with its volcanic tracts and half-civilised peoples. Otherwise, semi-education is altogether undesirable, and when, as here, it has stood, marking time so to speak, at the same point for a century or so, far from attractive. One prefers either one or the other ; either civilisation or the freedom of the wilds. Until the leading men realise this, there will never be any proper order in the country, and without internal concord, based on constitutional liberty, no country can keep pace with modern development. Central America is a striking example of the results of jealousy and dissension. It will perhaps hardly play any great part in the history of humanity, but, with its magnificent situation, its largely excellent climatic conditions,

and more especially, its endless wealth of natural resources, it should at least occupy a far more prominent place than at present.

Our voyage home was devoid of anything sensational. Suffice it to say that we made our way to Jamaica, thence through New York, and across the Atlantic, in far less time than we had reckoned on. And one fine midsummer morning we sighted the blue reefs of Bohuslän once more.

And with renewed emphasis the old saw came into mind: East or west; home is best. One never appreciates one's own country so thoroughly as after a long voyage.

The events of our journey are now things of the past; only the memory remains. But memories are not merely the reflection of happenings that once helped to work out man's fate and lot; they are also the indestructible capital upon the ever-increasing interest of which he comes at last to live.

Travel can have its ennobling influence as well as staying at home. All depends on the individual character. But let us never forget that we are all of us travellers before the Lord.



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